THE

LIFE

OF OUR BLESSED SAVIOUR

JESUS CHRIST.

With Conſiderations and Diſcourſes

UPON THE

CONCEPTION,	MIRACLES,
NATIVITY,	PASSION,
CIRCUMCISION,	RESURRECTION,
BAPTISM,	AND HIS
TEMPTATION,	ASCENSION INT
PREACHING,	HEAVEN:

Including ſeveral unanſwerable arguments, obvious to the meaneſt capacity, in defence of the divinity of our Holy Redeemer, and the truth of the chriſtian religion.—Likewiſe,

The Lives, Acts, and Deaths of the holy

Evangeliſts and Apoſtles, as recorded by the primitive fathers, and ancient writers of unqueſtionable veracity.

BY J. TAY[illegible]R, B. D.

PRINTED AT NEWBURYPORT, BY

BLUNT AND MARCH FOR SAMUEL LARKIN,

Bookſeller and Stationer, Portſmouth.

MDCCXCVI.

BRITISH MUSEUM

TO THE

READER.

THE *whole duty of man is, to fear God, and keep his commandments; and the principal design of his creation is, that he may glorify God upon earth, and by the merits and intercession of Jesus Christ, may enjoy eternal happiness in the presence of God, in the world to come, wherein is fulness of joy, and at whose right hand are pleasures for evermore. To attain this everlasting inheritance, it is absolutely necessary to acquaint ourselves with God, and our blessed Saviour, and to be fully persuaded of the truth of the divinity of Jesus, and the certainty of his being the Messiah, promised to the patriarchs and Apostles some thousands of years before; who in the fulness of time made his appearance for the salvation of all that sincerely believe in him, and walk in obedience to his holy precepts and doctrines. This small tract is designed for the purposes aforenamed, that*

all true christians may know in whom they have believed. *For which many undeniable arguments and considerations are advanced, which may be comprehended by the meanest understanding, and may put to silence such abandoned wretches as deny the Lord that bought them; who being resolved to continue in a course of profaneness and irreligion, endeavor to harden their consciences, and persuade themselves that there is no God, nor future state of punishment, because they desire it may be so. I have also added the* Lives *of the holy* Evangelists *and* Apostles, *with their* martyrdom *for preaching and publishing the good tidings of salvation to the barbarous nations, with such mighty success, that thousands were converted, and afterwards suffered death for the profession of the gospel, and asserting the truth and certainty of the christian religion, against all its oppposers; these things are written for our instruction, and may so fortify us, that it may not be in the power of those deceivers who are bread in the world to weaken our faith and confidence in the mercy of God, and the merits of our blessed Saviour, that we shall at last attain everlasting life and happiness.*

J. TAYLOR.

1 NO 61

THE LIFE OF CHRIST, &c.

IT is undeniable, that through the whole body of the old teſtament, the Jews had a promiſed Meſſiah, the ſame that we call Chriſt, or a perſon anointed and ſent from God, to be a Saviour, a Redeemer, a pacifier of God's wrath, a mediator between God and man, a ſatisfier for the ſins and offences of the whole world, a reſtorer of our innocency loſt in paradiſe, a maſter and inſtructor, a law-giver, a ſpiritual and eternal King, and ſhould ſit, and rule, and reign in our hearts, to conquer the power and tyranny of ſatan, the enemy of mankind, who overcame our firſt parents in paradiſe, and never ceaſeth to aſſail us with his temptations. For the firſt covenant that ever God made with man, was, *In the day that thou eateſt of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, thou ſhalt ſurely die.*

This covenant being broken by our common progenitor, he received judgment accordingly, but with this benign promiſe, *That the ſeed of the woman ſhould break the ſerpent's head*, who had beguiled them, and he ſhould lie in wait to hurt the heel of mankind: That is, the time ſhould come, when one ſhould proceed out of the ſeed of the woman, who ſhall conquer death and ſin, the weapon of the devil, and ſhall make void all his temptations, and trample them under his feet, and this ſhall be Chriſt, the Meſſias of the world.

For whatſoever the latter Jews dreamt, That the Meſſias ſhould ſet up a temporal kingdom, and reſtore them to their country and former government: It is evident the ancient Rabbies of that nation in the old Chaldee paraphraſe, called the Jeruſalem Targum, apply theſe words.—That the devil that deceived Adam, ſaying, 'Mankind has an infallible and preſent remedy againſt thee, O ſatan! For 'the time will come that they ſhall tread 'thee down with their heels, by the help of 'the *Meſſias*, who ſhall be their king.

The very ſame promiſe is ſeveral times repeated and eſtabliſhed to *Abraham*, who lived near two thouſand years after *Adam*,

and again to *Isaac* his Son after him, *Gen.* 12. 18. 22. In thy ſeed ſhall all nations of the earth be bleſſed, which had been a ſmall benediction to *Abraham*, or to the *Jews* after him (that never actually ſaw the *Meſſias*) if he had been a temporal king over the *Jews* only. And a much leſs bleſſing to the *Gentile* world, if he was to ſubdue and deſtroy all that would not ſubmit to the *Jewiſh* conſtitution.

But *Jacob* propheſieth plainly at his death of the coming of Chriſt, in theſe words: *The ſcepter ſhall not depart from Judah, nor a law-giver from between his feet, till Shilah, or the Meſſias come, and to him ſhall the gathering of the people be.* Which latter words the forenamed Chaldee paraphraſe, and the great Onkelos (both of ſingular authority among the Jews) interpret until Chriſt and the Meſſias come, who is the expectation of all nations. Now if he be the hope and expectation of the Jews, as well as Gentiles, then can he not be a temporal king to deſtroy the Gentiles, as the late Jews imagine: but a ſpiritual king to reign over them, and to bring in ſubjection their ſpiritual enemies, namely, the world, the fleſh, and the devil, as all true chriſtians believe.

But to leave this controverſy with the latter Rabbins, and to proceed to ſhew that Chriſt was foretold and promiſed to the Jews; it is to be obſerved, that after the death of Jacob, little is recorded of the doings of the Jews, during the four hundred years that they were in bondage in Egypt; yet that nation have a tradition, that as ſoon as they were delivered out of that ſlavery, and come into the wilderneſs, in their travels toward the land of Canaan, the three ſons of Koran, Aſſir, Elkanah, and Ahiaſaph, mentioned in Exodus 6, and in other places, compoſed divers ſongs and pſalms in the praiſe and expectation of the Meſſiah to come, and the holy men of that time ſolaced themſelves with ſinging of the ſame; and that king David afterward in the ſecond part of his Pſalms, from the 45th, to the 87th Pſalm, collected moſt of theſe old ſongs together, as they now ſtand.

Moſes likewiſe propheſied of Chriſt, Deut. 18, 15. *The Lord thy God will raiſe up unto thee a prophet from the midſt of thee, of thy brethren, like unto thee, unto him ye ſhall hearken in all things whatſoever he ſhall ſay unto you; and it ſhall come to paſs, that every ſoul that will not hear that*

phet, ſhall be deſtroyed from among the people, Deut. 18. *Acts.* 3. which words cannot be underſtood of any prophet that ever lived after Moſes among the Jews, as is manifeſt by what the Holy Ghoſt ſays of him: *And there aroſe not a prophet ſince in Iſrael like unto Moſes, whom the Lord knew face to face, Deut.* 34.

David who lived about four hundred years after Moſes, a man after God's own heart, and the firſt king of Judah, but of which tribe and whoſe lineage the Meſſias was to come, had this myſtery more plainly revealed to him than to any before him. For he was aſſured that Chriſt ſhould be born of that ſtock, as God had promiſed him by the prophet Nathan, ſaying, *Thy Seed will I eſtabliſh forever, and build up thy throne to all generations; for I have made a covenant with my choſen, and have ſworn to David my Servant*, which words the latter Jews apply to King Solomon, and may in ſome ſenſe be true, ſince Solomon was a type of Chriſt to come, but cannot be verified in him, whoſe earthly kingdom was rent and divided by Jeroboam, and muſt therefore be underſtood of an eternal King, which ſhould ariſe out of David's ſeed; and therefore it is ſaid in

Pſalm 2, *Thou art my ſon, this day have I begotten thee, I will give thee the heathen for thy Inheritance, and the utmoſt parts of the Earth for thy poſſeſſion*; which was never fulfilled in Solomon, nor in any other temporal king after him. And much leſs what is written in pſalm lxxii. *He ſhall reign from ſea to ſea, and from the rivers to the end of the Earth. All kings ſhall fall down before him; all nations ſhall worſhip him. His name ſhall endure for ever, as long as the ſun, and all nations ſhall call him bleſſed.* All theſe promiſes and expreſſions can never be applied to any but Jeſus Chriſt alone.

This promiſe made to David for Chriſt to come of his ſeed, is repeated after his death by many of his prophets, particularly by Jeremiah, chap. xxiii. *Behold the days come, ſaith the Lord, that I will raiſe unto David a righteous branch, and a king ſhall reign and proſper, and this is his name whereby he ſhall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS:* All this was ſpoken of David's ſeed above four hundred years after his death.

Ezekiel likewiſe, who was contemporary with Jeremiah, calls the Meſſias by the name of David himſelf, Ezekiel xxxiv.

I will ſave my flocks, and they ſhall be no more a prey. And I will ſet up one ſhepherd over them and he ſhall feed them, even my ſervant David, and he ſhall be their ſhepherd, and a prince among them and he ſhall feed them: Which words both Chriſtians and the modern Jews in the Talmud, confeſs to be meant of the Meſſias, and we believe to be foretold of Chriſt; David being four hundred years before, and could not come again to govern and feed the people of God.

Iſaiah the prophet, who lived above one hundred years before Jeremiah or Ezekiel, had plain and eminent diſcoveries of the Meſſias, in the 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, chapters of that prophecy; wherein he ſays, That Chriſt being ſent to the Jews, he complains of them; and that he is ſent unto the gentiles with gracious promiſes. He ſhews that the occaſion of the Jews being caſt off, is not to be imputed to the Meſſias, he having ability to ſave, by his obedience in that work, and by his confidence of God's aſſiſtance, Chriſt there perſuadeth his church to believe his free redemption; to receive the miniſters thereof, to joy in the power thereof, and that his kingdom ſhall be exalted. The prophet alſo

complains of the incredulity of the people excuſeth the ſcandal of the croſs, by the benefit of Chriſt's paſſion, and the good ſucceſs thereof: the ſame prophet particularly expreſſes the graces and divine properties of Chriſt, as that he ſhall for ever overthrow and deſtroy death; he ſhall open the eyes of the blind, and the ears of the deaf, he ſhall not cry nor contend, nor ſhall accept the perſon of any Man, but in truth he ſhall bring forth truth in righteouſneſs. And Daniel who lived in the end of the captivity of Babylon, ſome time before Haggi, Zachary, or Malachi, who were the laſt prophets that ever flouriſhed among the Jews, almoſt five hundred years before the coming of Chriſt, ſpeaks plainly of his being cut off, and put to death, Dan. ix. And to inſiſt upon no more, the whole ſcripture centers this one point, to foretel and manifeſt Chriſt to be the Meſſias, by ſigns, figures, parables and propheſies.

But to be more particular in the demonſtration of this momentous and fundamental truth; That this Jeſus of whom the four evangeliſts treat, is the true Meſſias; let us compare the chriſtian goſpel with the Jewiſh Law; or the hiſtories of

Chriſt under the one, with the propheſies of the Meſſias under the other; and thence conclude, that if whatſoever was foretold concerning the Meſſias, was fulfilled in this Jeſus Chriſt; then he was undoubtedly the Meſſias who was to come into the world for the ſalvation of mankind: to make which compariſon the more exact, let us run through the ſeveral circumſtances that attended his birth, life, death, reſurrection and aſcenſion, and obſerve how punctually the propheſies of them were fulfilled in every particular.

And Firſt, for the birth of the Meſſias, the law ſaith, he was to be born of the ſeed of Abraham, Gen. 22. 18. and, David, 2 Sam. 7. 12. and of the ſeed of Jeſſe, Iſa. 11. 1. From whence, he is frequently called by the Jews, the Son of David. The goſpel ſaith, Jeſus Chriſt was the Son of David, the Son of Abraham, Matt. 1. 2. The law, that he was to be born of a Virgin, Iſa. 7. 14. The goſpel, that Mary a virgin, brought forth this Jeſus, Matt. 1. 18. Luke 1, 17, 31, 35. chap. 2. 5, 6, 7. The law, that he was to be born at Bethlehem Ephrata. Mich. 5. 1. The goſpel, that this Jeſus was born there, Matt. 11. 1. Luke 4. 5. 6. The law

ſays, that he was to be brought out of Egypt, Hoſea 11. 1. The goſpel, that Jeſus was called thence, Matt. 11. 19, 20. The law, that one ſhould go before the Meſſias, Mal. 3. 5. and ſhould cry in the wilderneſs, Iſaiah 11. 3. The goſpel, that John Baptiſt did ſo before Chriſt, Matt. 3. 1, 3. Mark 1, 2, 3. The law, that the Meſſias ſhould preach the doctrine of ſalvation in Galilee, who ſitting before in darkneſs, ſhould ſee great light, Iſa. 9. 1, 2. The goſpel, that Jeſus did ſo, Matt. 18. 12. 23. The law, that in the days of the Meſſias, the eyes of the blind ſhould be opened, and the ears of the deaf ſhould be unſtopped, the lame leap, and the tongue of the dumb ſing. Iſai. 35. 5. The goſpel, that it was ſo in the days of Jeſus Chriſt, Matt. 4. 23. and chap. 11. 5.

But for all theſe wonders and miracles, the law ſaith, they ſhould hear, but not underſtand, and ſee, yet not perceive, Iſai. 6. 9. And the goſpel, that ſeeing they did not ſee, and hearing they did not hear, nor yet underſtand, Matt. 13. 13. The law, that he ſhould be deſpiſed and rejected of men, a man of ſorrows and acquainted with grief. Iſa. 53, 3. The goſpel, that Jeſus Chriſt had not where to lay his

head, Matt. 8. 20. His ſoul was exceeding ſorrowful, even unto Death, Matt. 26. 38. Yea, he was in an agony, and his ſweat was as drops of blood, Luke 22. 24. ſo well was he acquainted with grief. The law ſays, that he ſhould ride into Jeruſalem upon an aſs, and upon a colt, the foal of an aſs, Zech. 11. 9. And the goſpel, that Jeſus Chriſt as he was going to Jeruſalem, having found an aſs, ſat thereon, John 12. 14. Matt. 21. 6. At which time the law ſaith, the people ſhould cry, Hoſannah; bleſſed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord, Pſalm 118. 26. The goſpel, that they did ſo to Chriſt, Matt. 21. 9. The law foretels, that one of his own familiar friends, in whom he truſted, which did eat of his bread, did betray him into the hands of the Jews, Matt. 26. 47. Luke 22. 46. The law, that he ſhould be prized at, and ſold for thirty pieces of ſilver, with which ſhould be bought the Potter's Field, Zech. 11, 12, 13. The goſpel, that they covenanted with Judas, to betray Jeſus for thirty pieces of ſilver, Matt. 26. 15. with which they afterwards bought the Potter's Field, chap. 27. 7. The law, that he ſhould be numbered among tranſgreſſors, Iſa. 53, 12. The goſpel, that Jeſus Chriſt was crucified between two thieves, Mark

15. 27. Matt. 27. 38. The law, that he ſhould be wounded and bruiſed, Iſa. 53. 5. The goſpel, that they ſcourged Jeſus, Matt. 32, 20. and ſmote him. Mark 15. 19. The law ſaith, they ſhould pierce his hands and feet, Pſalm 22, 19. Zech. 12. 10. The goſpel, that they crucified Jeſus, Matt. 27. 35. Luke 23. Whereby they uſed to pierce the hands and feet of thoſe that were put to this death, and nail them to the croſs: But tho' they ſhould pierce his fleſh, yet the law ſaith, they ſhould not break his bones, no, not one of them, Exod. 12. 46. Numb. 9. 13. Pſalm 34. 20. The goſpel, that they brake not the legs of Chriſt, John 19. 33. 36. The law, that they ſhould ſee him, ſhould laugh him to ſcorn, ſhoot out their lips, and ſhake their heads, ſaying, *He truſted in the Lord, that he would deliver him: Let him deliver him, ſeeing he delighted in him.* Pſalm 22. 8. The goſpel, that the Scribes and Phariſees did ſo by Chriſt, Matt. 27. 42, 43. The law ſaith, they ſhould give him gall for meat, and vinegar to drink. Pſal. 49. 21. And the goſpel, that they gave Chriſt venegar to drink, mingled with gall. Matt. 27. 34. 48. The law, that they ſhould part his garments among them, and caſt lots upon his veſture. Pſal. 22. 19. The goſpel, that they parted Je-

ſus' garments among them, and caſt lots. Matt. 27. 35. John 19. 23. Mark 15. 24.

And as for the time of this Jeſus' coming into the world; it is certain that he came before the ſecond temple was demoliſhed, for it is ſaid, that he went into the temple, Matt. 19. 45. yea he himſelf taught daily in it, ver. 47. By which means the glory of the ſecond temple was greater than the glory of the firſt, according to the prophecy of Hag. 11. 9. As for Jacob's prophecy, that the ſcepter ſhould not depart from Judah, nor the law-giver, till Shiloh, or the Meſſias ſhould come. Gen. 49. 10. It is certain that it did not depart from Judah, till Herod was by Auguſtus and the ſenate of Rome, made king of Judea, in whoſe days this Jeſus was born, Matt. 11. 2. Luke 1. 5. And ſo Daniel's ſeventy weeks, or four hundred and ninety years, did exactly, reach unto, and were determined in the days of this Jeſus, as might eaſily be demonſtrated. So that all the old propheſies concerning the Meſſias coming are perfectly fulfilled in this Jeſus of Nazareth.

Furthermore, the law ſaith, that tho' the Meſſias ſhould be crucified, yet God would not leave his ſoul in hell, nor ſuffer his ho-

ly one to ſee corruption, Pſ. 16. 10. And that when God ſhould make his ſoul a ſacrifice for ſin, he ſhould ſee his ſeed, and prolong his days, Iſaiah 53. 10. which plainly implies, that tho' the Meſſias ſhould die, yet he ſhould riſe again, and that within a few days too, otherwiſe he would have ſeen corruption. Now the goſpel ſays, that this Jeſus roſe from the dead, Matt. 28. 6. Luke 24. 6. and that he was ſeen of ſeveral after his reſurrection, as of Mary Magdalen. Matt. 28. 9. of the eleven diſciples, ver. 16. 17. 18. Mark 16. 14. of the two that were going to Emmaus, Luke 24. 13. 14. 15. of Simon Peter alone, ver. 24. and of all the diſciples gathered together, the doors being ſhut, John 20. 16. And to be ſure that it was himſelf, and not an apparition, Thomas, one of the twelve, thruſt his hands into his ſide, and found it fleſh and blood indeed, and he did eat and drink before them, Luke 24. 43. which it is impoſſible that a ſpirit could do. He was ſeen of Peter and John, and other diſciples, whilſt they were fiſhing, and eat and drank with them, John 21. Of five hundred brethren at once, and of Paul himſelf, 1 Cor. 15. 6. Neither did he lie ſo long as to ſee corruption, for he was buried but the day before the ſabbath, Mark

15. 42. and roſe the day after. ch. 16. 1.

Again, Jeſus was not only to riſe again, but the law ſaith, he was to aſcend on high, to lead captivity captive, and to give gifts unto men, Pſal. 16. 18. Now this cannot but be an undoubted character of the Meſſias, not only to riſe from the dead, but to aſcend up to heaven, and thence to diſperſe his gifts among the children of men, and that Chriſt did ſo, is evident from the goſpel; for after he had ſpoken with them, he was received up into heaven, and there ſat on the right hand of God, Matt. 16. 19. Luke 24. 41. He gave ſuch gifts to men, as that his diſciples of a ſudden, were enabled to ſpeak all manner of languages, Acts 2. 8. to work many ſigns and wonders, chap. 5. 12. to heal all manner of diſeaſes, ver. 17, 16 yea, with a word ſpeaking, to cure a man lame from his mother's womb, chap. 3. 6. 7.

Theſe conſiderations ſeem to make the goſpel a perfect tranſcript of the law; and the hiſtories of Jeſus are nothing elſe but the propheſies of Chriſt turned into an hiſtory: And certainly the piety of his life, the purity of his doctrines, and his miraculous works, are a further confirmation of the truth of what is here related: For the miracles that he wrought, as the healing

the ſick with a word of his mouth, raiſing the dead, feeding ſo many thouſands with five loaves and the like, were ſo powerful and convincing, that his very enemies who would not believe him to be the Meſſias could ſcarce deny him to be a God, as Joſephus, the Jewiſh hiſtorian teſtifies in his antiquities, Lib. 18, chap. 4. And it is a tenet to this day among ſome of them that the miracles which Jeſus did, were not the deluſions or juggles of ſatan, but real miracles, wrought as they pretend by virtue of the name of God, Jehovah, which they ſay Jeſus got out of the temple; whereby it is plain that they acknowledged God to be the author of them, which doubtleſs could not be, unleſs they were agreeable to his will, and for the glory of his name.

Neither was the doctrine of the goſpel only eſtabliſhed at the firſt, but propagated afterward by miracles, that a doctrine ſo much contrary to fleſh and blood, as propoſing nothing in his life, but that the profeſſors of it ſhould have troubles in this world, ſhould be as ſheep among wolves, ſhould be perſecuted, impriſoned, ſcourged, put to death, and be hated of all men for their maſter's ſake; and this doctrine propagated by a company of ſimple

illiterate men, who had neither power to force, nor eloquence to perſuade men to the belief of it, or embracing it; that yet ſuch perſons as theſe were, ſhould ever make any of the Jews, who expected a king for their Meſſiah, to advance them to temporal dignities, to believe that this Jeſus whom themſelves ſcourged and crucified at Jeruſalem, was that perſon, or that they ſhould be able to propagate the goſpel among the Gentiles alſo, who neither believed in the true God, nor expected any thing of a Meſſias to come and redeem them: Yet this they did, and brought over not only many people, but whole nations and countries to the profeſſion of the goſpel, ſpreading this moſt holy doctrine among the moſt barbarous and ſinful people, in ſpight of all the oppoſition that the world, the fleſh, and the devil could make againſt it.

Now no man that exerciſeth his reaſon, can imagine that they did all this purely by their own ſtrength, nor that theſe wonderful effects could ever have been produced by any thing leſs than the wiſdom, and power and faithfulneſs of their Lord and Maſter, whoſe ſervice they were engaged in, and who promiſed to be with them to the end of the world, Matt. 28. 20. Doubt-

leſs it was nothing elſe but the ſpirit of the moſt high God, that aſſiſted them, and accompanied the word they preached, otherwiſe it could never have made ſuch a deep impreſſion upon the hearts of them that heard it as not only to command their attentions, but to hinder them from reſiſting (when they ſtrove and endeavoured to do it) that power and authority by which the diſciples ſpake.

So that it is evident, that all the books of the ancient law, with all thoſe which have been received into the canon of the ſcriptures, by the church of God ſince the coming of Chriſt, which we call the New Teſtament, (which teſtify the truth of the divinity of our Saviour) I ſay that all thoſe books from the beginning of Geneſis, to the end of the Revelations, are indeed the word of the Eternal, dictated by his own ſpirit, to ſuch as himſelf was pleaſed to employ in the writing of them, and that they contain in them a perfect rule of faith and manners; upon the due obſervance of which no man can fail of worſhipping and ſerving God in ſuch a manner, as will be acceptable to him here, and enjoying hereafter thoſe exceeding great and precious promiſes, that he has reſerved in heaven for ſuch as do ſo.

As to the time of the coming of the Meſſiah, it is evident that about 1,600 years ago, the Jews did generally expect it, and that many did pretend to be the perſon, as one Bar-cozbah, at this time declaring himſelf to be the man; almoſt all the whole nation unanimouſly joined themſelves to him, inſomuch that the Jews report, there were no leſs than four or five hundred thouſand of them ſlain by the emperor Adrian, in the city of Bittet, all fighting in defence of this counterfeit Meſſiah, many others likewiſe pretended to be he, and ſome to this day, hold, that he is already come, but that by reaſon of their ſins, he is not revealed to them.

Now it is to be obſerved, that by the conſent of all chriſtian writers, Jeſus, whom we believe, and confeſs to be the true chriſt was born the 25th of December, in the forty-ſecond year of Auguſtus Cæſar, the Roman emperor, and fifteen before his death; in the thirty-third year of the reign of Herod king of Judea, and from the creation, about four thouſand years, the ſtate of the world being thus at Chriſt's nativity; The three monarchies of the world, the Aſſyrians, Perſians and Grecians were paſſed away and ended, and the Roman, greater than all the former, was begun according

to the prophecy of Daniel, five hundred years before Auguſtus; who after five civil wars and infinite blood ſhed and devaſtations in the world, reigned alone in peace many years; and in token of univerſal peace over the earth, the temple of Janus (or war) was ſhut, which happened but twice before, ſince the building of Rome; and the very ſame day that Chriſt was born in Judea, Auguſtus commanded in Rome (as was afterwards obſerved) that no man ſhould call him Lord, thereby ſignifying the liberty and ſecurity which mankind now enjoyed, after the world had ſuſtained ſuch woeful deſolations by wars for ſo many years, and ſaying unknowingly that a greater Lord than he was now born in the world; which agreed exactly to the prophecy of Daniel, that there ſhould be three monarchies, and the laſt the greateſt, at whoſe appearance the Meſſias ſhould come and build up God's kingdom throughout the whole world, and Iſaiah, one hundred years before, foretold, that at the coming of Chriſt the people ſhould ſit in peace, and that there ſhould be no end of peace; and king David, Pſalm 71, ſays, In his days ſhall the righteous flouriſh, and there ſhall be abundance of peace, which was then very neceſſary for the qui-

et planting and publiſhing the goſpel of Chriſt; the wars which had ſo long diſturbed the earth, miraculouſly almoſt ceaſing at this very time, to make way for the coming of the prince of peace. To conclude this point of Chriſt's appearing;

About his birth, there concurred ſo many circumſtances, as the general peace of the Roman Empire, the expiration of the line of Judah, the fulfilling of Daniel's weeks, the public fame and expectation of the Jews, with their vain expectations for one thouſand ſix hundred years of another Meſſiah. Their being diſperſed all over the world, without either temple, law, ſacrifice, prophet, or promiſe for their redemption, which never happened to them in all their former captivities, before the death of Jeſus, and which promiſes they had for their conſolation in their miſeries; theſe things being laid together, we may aſſuredly conclude, that Chriſt was born at the juſt time predicted by the ſpirit of God; and conſequently, that he only was the true Meſſias and ſaviour of the world. So that when the fulneſs of time was come, after the frequent repetition of promiſes; the expiration of the Jewiſh nation; the longing and earneſt waiting of all holy perſons; God having great

compaſſion towards mankind, remembering his promiſes, and our great neceſſities, ſent his ſon into the world, to take upon him our nature, and that guilt of ſin which it had contracted, and all that puniſhment which was conſequent thereto, which came to paſs in the following manner.

THE CONCEPTION OF JESUS CHRIST.

IN the days of Herod the king, the angel Gabriel was ſent from God, unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth, to a holy maid eſpouſed to Joſeph, and found her in a capacity and excellent diſpoſition, to receive the greateſt honour that was ever beſtowed on the daughters of men. Her employment was holy and pious, her perſon young, her years florid and ſpringing, her body chaſte, her mind humble, and a rare repoſitory of divine graces, and God poured upon her a full meaſure of honour, in making her the mother of the Meſſias; For the angel came to her, and ſaid, *Hail; thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee, bleſſed art thou among women.* Which meſſage is paraphraſed by the poet, in a dialogue between Gabriel and Mary, as follows:

G. *Hail, bleſſed* Mary. *M.* What celeſtial tongue
Calls ſinful *Mary* bleſſed? G. *It is I.*
M. Who art thou? G. *I am* Gabriel, *that belong*
To the high choir of Heaven. *M.* I faint I die.
G. *Fear not, ſweet virgin, all the world ſhall be*
Made debtors to thy womb, and bleſt in thee.
M. HowLord? G. *Thy virgin womb ſhall bear a ſon,*
That ſhall redeem the world. *M.* MyLord,how can
Such wonders come to paſs, ſuch things be done
By a poor virgin, never known by man?
G. *The Holy Ghoſt at his appointed hour,*
Shall make thee pregnant by its ſacred pow'r.
M. Wonder of wonders! G. *At whoſe heighth the choir*
Of Heaven ſtand raviſht, tremble and admire.
M. O may it be according to thy word!
G. *Before ten months fully completed be,*
Thou ſhalt be known the Mother of our Lord.
And thou ſhalt have thy Saviour on thy Knee.
M. Both heaven&earth ſhall triumph,& the frame
Of Hell ſhall tremble at *Maria's* Name.
G. *All ages paſt, preſent, and to come,*
Shall joy in Mary, *and in* Mary's *Womb.*

The virgin having now the ſon of God in her chaſte womb, and the holy ſpirit in her heart, who had alſo overſhadowed her, enabling her to a ſupernatural and miraculous conception, aroſe with haſte and gladneſs, to communicate that joy which was deſigned for all the world, and found no breaſt ſo proper to pour forth the emanations of her overjoyed heart, as her couſin Elizabeth, who had received this divine teſtimony, that ſhe was righteous

before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameleſs, who had alſo a ſpecial portion in this great honour, for ſhe was deſigned to be the mother of John the Baptiſt, who was ſent as a forerunner to prepare the ways of the Lord, and make his paths ſtrait, and Mary aroſe in thoſe days, and went into the hill country with haſte, into a city of Judah, and entered the houſe of Zacharias, and ſaluted Eliſabeth; the angel Gabriel having told her, that ſhe alſo had conceived a ſon in her old age, and this was the ſixth month with her who was called barren, ſo that upon the ſalutation of Mary the babe leaped in her womb. It is not eaſy to imagine what ecſtacies of joy there were at this bleſſed meeting; two mothers of two great princes, one the greateſt that was born of a woman; the other his forerunner to prepare his way; and their converſation was doubtleſs, holy and divine, as they were both prophetically inſpired, and all their faculties turned into grace. After they had re-ſaluted each other, Mary abode with her couſin Elizabeth about three months, and then returned to her own houſe; where, when ſhe appeared with her holy burthen, to her huſband Joſeph, and that he perceived her to be with

child, and knew that he never unſealed the holy fountain of virginal purity, he was troubled; for although her deportment had been pious and chaſte to a miracle, her carriage ſo reſerved, as drove away all temptations and impure thoughts from thoſe that might ſee or converſe with her, yet he conſidering only the principles of nature, was minded to put her away, but yet privily, becauſe he was a good man, and knew her piety to be ſuch, that he ſeemed to offer violence to his ſenſes, to believe what was viſible and plain, and would therefore do it privately. But while he thought on theſe things, the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, ſaying, Joſeph, thou ſon of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife; for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghoſt. And Joſeph being raiſed from ſleep, did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him, and took unto him his wife.

The holy virgin could not but know that Joſeph would be troubled with ſorrow and inſecure apprehenſions concerning her being with child; but ſuch was her innocency and her confidence in God that ſhe held her peace, expecting as we may ſuppoſe, which way God would provide a remedy for the inconvenience; for

if we commit ourſelves to God in well doing, as unto a faithful creator, he will aſſert our innocency, and free us from ſcandal, if it be expedient for us; if it be not, it is not fit we ſhould deſire it; and accordingly this bleſſed virgin was ſoon freed from the leaſt guilt in this tranſaction.

For Joſeph was not haſty in the execution of his purpoſe, nor in the determining of his thoughts, but ſtood long in deliberation, and longer before he acted in this invidious manner, which had an appearance of rigour and ſeverity; She was firſt to live defam'd and be accus'd publicly, and being convicted by the law, was to die, if he had gone the ordinary way: But he who was a juſt man, which in the ſtile of ſcripture and other wiſe writers, is a good, a charitable man, thought it more agreeable to juſtice, to treat an offending perſon with the eaſieſt ſentence, than to put things to extremity, and render the perſon deſperate, and provoked by the worſt of what ſhe could fear, but waved the killing letter of the law, and ſecured his own intereſt and his juſtice too, by intending to diſmiſs her privately. But before the thing was irremediable, God ended his doubts by an heavenly demonſtration, in ſending an angel to reveal to

him the innocence of his ſpouſe, and the divinity of her ſon. Now altho the manner of his conception, and the meſſage or annunciation made to his mother by the angel, depend principally upon the relation and credit of the virgin herſelf, who only was privy thereto, and upon the teſtimony of Joſeph, to whom it was revealed by the ſame angel afterward; yet conſidering the circumſtances of the thing itſelf, namely, the ſimplicity and honeſty of the reporters; and that it was very unlikely that Joſeph being juſt as he is called, would have concealed a thing ſo much againſt himſelf, and againſt the law, if he had not been fully aſſured of the truth of the affair. Again the innocent age of the bleſſed virgin, who (St. Auſtin and other ancient fathers write) was not above fourteen years old at that time; all theſe things make it very improbable, that ſhe would invent ſuch a matter of herſelf; and finally, the ſtrange prophecy that ſhe uttered in her Canticle or Magnificat, and which we ſee now fulfilled; albeit, at that time very unlikely, that all nations ſhall call her bleſſed, &c. All theſe things conſidered fully, demonſtrate the truth of this matter.

THE NATIVITY OF JESUS CHRIST.

THE holy maid may be judged to long to be a glad mother, expecting when the ſon of righteouſneſs ſhould break forth from his bed, where nine months he had hid himſelf behind a fruitful cloud.—About the end of which, God, who in his infinite wiſdom, cauſes all things to co-operate to his divine purpoſes, brought the holy virgin to Bethlehem, the city of David, to be taxed, with her huſband Joſeph, purſuant to a decree upon all the world, publiſhed by Auguſtus; which happened in this juncture of time, that the prophecy of Micah might be fulfilled; *And thou Bethlehem, in the Land of Judah, art not the leaſt among the princes of Judah, for out of thee ſhall come a governor that ſhall rule my people Iſrael.*

This rare act of providence is highly remarkable, becauſe this taxing ſeems wholly ordered by God, to ſerve and miniſter to the circumſtances of this birth. For this taxing was not in order to tribute. Herod was now king, and received all the revenues of Judea, paid a certain tribute to Auguſtus, as other kings and princes un-

der the Roman dominion did; but this was only his ſending commiſſioners to tax every city, in order to make an inqueſt of the ſtrength of the empire both in men and money, he having no other advantage by it; but ſeems to be directed in it by him who rules and turns the hearts of princes, that he might by verifying a prophecy, ſignify & publiſh the miſſion & birth of Jeſus.

When the holy virgin perceived that the expectation of the nations was arrived at the very doors of revelation, ſhe brought forth the bleſſed Jeſus, and although all the world were concerned in the birth of this great prince, yet we do not read of any that miniſtered at it but the angels: And thus was Jeſus born of a poor mother, in a poor place, in a cold winter's night, far from home, among ſtangers, with all the circumſtances of humility and poverty, naked as the innocence of Adam, whom his mother, after having cradled him in her arms, took and wrapt in ſwadling-cloths. For ſo was the deſign of his humility, that as the laſt ſcene of his life was numbred among thieves, ſo the firſt among beaſts, the ſheep and the oxen; which is thus repreſented by the poet.

O thou! who wert the king of heaven and earth,
How poorly wert thou tended at thy birth;
A manger was thy cradle, and a ſtable,
Thy privy-chamber; Mary's knees thy table.

Thieves were thy courtiers, and the crofs thy throne;
Thy diet gall, a wreath of thorns thy crown:
All this the king of glory endur'd, and more,
To make us kings, that were but ſlaves before.

No man therefore will have cauſe to complain of his coarſe cloathing, if he remembers the ſwadling-cloaths of this holy child; nor be diſquieted at his hard bed when he conſiders Jeſus laid in a manger, nor be diſcontented at his thin table, when he calls to mind the King of heaven and earth was fed with a little breaſt-milk. But ſince the eternal wiſdom of the father, who knew to chuſe the good, and refuſe the evil, did chuſe a life of poverty; it may demonſtrate to us, that riches and honors, theſe idols in the world's eſteem, are ſo far from creating true felicity, that they are not to be reckoned as real good things; neither ought any one to be aſhamed of innocent poverty, of which the holy Jeſus made choice, and the apoſtles after him, made public profeſſion.

Although the birth of Chriſt was deſtitute of the uſual and leſs neceſſary pomps which generally illuſtrate the birth of princes, yet his firſt humility was made glorious with preſages, miracles, and ſignifications from heaven, beſides thoſe already mentioned: All the world did expect, that in Judea ſhould be born their true

prince, insomuch that Augustus the emperor, (as I have noted) about that very time, refused to be called Lord, which the christians were apt to believe, was occasioned by the prophecy of a female prophet, called a Sibyl, foretelling the birth of a greater prince, to whom all the world should pay adoration, who at that time was born in Judea: And when the oracle which Augustus consulted, was struck dumb, and would not answer any of the questions he desired to be resolved in, he told him unasked, that a Hebrew child should be his Lord and enemy.

The world being now at peace, and the temple of war was shut up, the prince of peace was born, and came to reconcile God with man, and man with his brother, by the sweetness of his example, and the influence of his holy doctrine, that the wolf and the lamb should lie down together. But because the heavens, as well as the earth, are his creatures, and do serve him; at his birth he received a sign from heaven above, as well as in the earth beneath, as an homage paid to their common Lord. For as certain shepherds were keeping watch over their flocks at night, near that part of the country (as it is thought) where Jacob used to feed his cattle when he was

in the land of Canaan, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord ſhone round about them and they were ſore afraid. And needs they muſt, when an angel came arrayed in glory, and cloathed their perſons in a robe of light, great enough to confound their underſtanding: but the angel ſaid unto them, *Fear not, for I bring unto you glad tidings of great joy, which ſhall be to all people, for unto you is born this day in the city of David, a Saviour which is Chriſt the Lord.*

The ſhepherds needed not any invitation to ſee this wondrous ſight, but leſt their expectation ſhould imagine he was a glorious prince, the angel told them a ſign that might take off their admiration to ſee ſo great a prince ſo poorly accommodated, he ſays, *This ſhall be a Sign unto you; ye ſhall find the babe wrapt in ſwadling cloaths, lying in a manger.*

The angel brought the meſſage to ſhepherds, perſons innocent, mean, and humble, who were more likely not to be ſcandalized at the poverty of the Meſſias; for thoſe perſons whoſe affections are ſet upon the pomps and vanities of this world, and are not uſed to charity and humility, are altogether removed from the underſtanding of ſpiritual excellencies, and can reliſh

nothing but the grandeur of earthly follies; they are prejudiced with God himſelf if he appears poor and mean, as the Scribes and Phariſees were at our bleſſed Saviour's ſimplicity; with theſe men, is weakneſs, a mean birth, an ignoble ſtain, beggary is a ſcandal, and the croſs an unanſwerable objection; but the angel inviting the poor ſhepherds to Bethlehem, is an evident intimation, that none are fit to come to Chriſt but the poor in ſpirit, deſpiſers of the world, ſincere in their hearts, without crafty or ſubtle deſigns; and therefore the angel did not bring the news to Herod, nor to the Scribes and Phariſees, whoſe ambitious projects were contradictory to the ſimplicity and poverty of the birth of Jeſus,

The angel having delivered this bleſſed meſſage, ſuddenly there was with him a multitude of the heavenly hoſt, whoſe ſong was, glory be to God on high; on Earth Peace, and Good-will toward Men: Refering not only to the profound peace, which at that time all the world was in; but to the greateſt peace which this newborn prince ſhould make between his father and all mankind. As ſoon as theſe heavenly choireſters had ended their glorious hymn, they returned into heaven,

and the ſhepherds went to Bethlehem, to ſee this thing which the Lord had made known to them; And they came with haſte, and found Mary and Joſeph, and the babe lying in a manger. Having obſerved all to be verified that the angel had told them; and when they had ſeen it, their hearts were filled ſo with the oil of gladneſs, that they ran over with joy, and being too big to be confined to their own breaſts, they communicated it to every one, and made known abroad the ſaying which was told them concerning the child. But Mary having changed her firſt joy into wonder, kept all theſe ſayings and pondered them in her heart. And the ſhepherds having ſeen and heard what the angels did upon the publication of the news learnt alſo to ſing to the honour of God, for the nativity of Chriſt, for the ſhepherds returned, glorifying and praiſing God for all the things that they had heard or ſeen, as it was told unto them.

But the angels had told the ſhepherds, that the nativity was glad tidings of great joy unto all people, and that the heavens declared the glory of God, and the firmament ſhewed his handy-work; this alſo was told abroad, even to the Gentiles by a ſign from heaven. For there was a pro-

phecy of Balaam, famous in all the Eaſtern country, and recorded by Moſes, Num. xxiv. 17. *There ſhall come a ſtar out of Jacob and a ſceptre ſhall ariſe out of Iſrael; out of Jacob ſhall come he that ſhall have dominion.* Which tho' in its firſt ſenſe, it ſignified David, who was the conqueror of the Moabites; yet in a more myſterious ſenſe, it related to the ſon of David: And in expectation of the event of this prophecy, the Arabians, the ſon of Abraham by Keturah, who were great ſtudents in Aſtronomy, and the motions of the planets, expected with much ſolicitude, the revelation of a mighty prince in Judea, at ſuch a time as a miraculous and extraordinary ſtar ſhould appear: And therefore, when Jeſus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, in the days of Herod the king, there came wiſe men, inſpired by God, and taught by their ſcience, and perſuaded by prophecy, from the eaſt to Jeruſalem and aſked confidently, and in a great openneſs, under the ear and eye of a tyrant prince, bloody and timorous, jealous and ambitious, *Where is he that is born King of the Jews? For we have ſeen his ſtar in the eaſt, and are come to worſhip him.* The Greeks ſuppoſe this ſtar was an angel, or ſuch a pillar of fire as went before the If-

raelites by night, during their travels in the wilderneſs.

Theſe Eaſtern princes, of whom St. Cyprian ſays, It was an old tradition of the church, that they were kings, or rather little Lords of particular places, (like thoſe of whom Joſhua ſlew thirty in one battle) declared the myſteriouſneſs of the ſtar, and that it was no prodigy or comet, foretelling diſeaſes, plague, war and death, but only the happy birth of a moſt excellent prince, yet it brought affrightment to Herod (and all Jeruſalem with him) who when he heard that a king was to be born in Judea, tho't he ſhould be diſpoſſeſt of his uſurped poſſeſſion of the kingdom.

For Joſephus relates, that his father named Antipater, was an Idumean, and that Herod being a well money'd man, induſtrious, factious, and well accompliſhed, he was in great favour with the Romans, and by his rare qualities, he at length married the daughter of Hircanus, king of Judea, who deſcended lineally from the houſe of David, and tribe of Judea. Hircanus being afterward defeated in a battle by the Perſians, they carried him captive into that country; hereupon Herod haſtens to Rome, and by the favour of Mark Anthony and Auguſtus, he was created

king of Judea by the ſenate of Rome, although Hircanus and his three ſons Antigonus, Alexander, Ariſtobulus, anddivers others of the royal blood, were all alive; but he ſoon found means to get Antigonus into his hands, and murdered him, with his younger brother Ariſtobulus, his wife Mariammè, the daughter of Hircanus and his three ſons, all of the royal houſe of Judah, he likewiſe ſlew forty of the principal noblemen, and all the Sanhedrim, or ſeventy two ſenators of the ſame tribe; he killed the chief of the ſect of the Phariſees; he burnt the genealogies of all the kings and princes of Judah, and hired an hiſtorian to draw out a pedigree from his progenitors, as if they were deſcended from the ancient kings of Judah; he ſold the high prieſthood to ſtrangers, and made ſuch havoc of Judah, as no part of government or dignity remained in any of them. And at this time Jeſus, of the ſame houſe, and line of Judah, was born in Bethlehem.

Now Herod imagining that an heir was ſent from heaven to challenge the kingdom, who brought a ſtar and the learning of the Eaſt with him, as evidence and credentials of his title; reſolved, if poſſible, to defeat the decrees of heaven, either by

policy or violence; and calling the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he found they all determined, that Bethlehem of Judah was the place designed by ancient prophecy and God's decree, where Christ should be born: Next, he inquired privately of the wise men, what time the star appeared, which had no regular motion according to the course of nature, but guided the Magi in their journey, so that it stood when they stood, and moved not when they rested, making no more haste than they did who carried much of the business and employment of the star along with them. And they having satisfied him in his questions, he sent them to Bethlehem with instructions to search diligently for the young child, and to bring him word, pretending that he would come and worship him also.

The wise men prosecuted the business of their journey, and having heard the king, they departed, and the star (which as it seems, still attended their motion) went before them, until it came and stood over where the young child was; where, when they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy. Such a joy as wearied travellers find, when they are come to the end of their journey, or entring their Inn.

A joy of nature, of wonder, and religion, and their ſpirit being heightened with expectation, they ran into the houſe, where they ſaw the young child with Mary his mother, and poſſibly they might be under ſome ſurprize, when inſtead of pomp and gaiety, they ſaw the great king's throne to be a manger, a ſtable his chamber of preſence, a thin court, and no miniſters, and the king himſelf a pretty babe, and but that he had a ſtar over his head, nothing to diſtinguiſh him from the miſeries of a poor, empty fortune.

This did not ſcandalize thoſe wiſe perſons, but being convinced by that teſtimony from heaven, and the union of circumſtances, they fell down and worſhipped him; after the manner of the eaſtern people, when they pay veneration to their kings, not with a ſalutation and bleſſing in words only, but they bring preſents and come into his courts; for when they had open'd their treaſures, they preſented unto him gifts, gold, frankincenſe and myrrh. Seeming to declare their faith by three articles in this oblation: By gold, that he was a king, by Incenſe, that he was a God, and by myrrh, that he was a man: Or as others imagine, that if there was any myſtery in theſe offerings, gold might

ſignify acts of mercy; myrrh the chaſtity of mind, or purity of our bodies, to the incorruption of which myrrh is eſpecially inſtrumental, and by its incenſe, our prayers, as the moſt proper preſents to the honour and ſervice of this young king; but whatever mens opinions were, the act of adoration was direct and religious, the myrrh was medicinal to his tender body; and incenſe poſſibly then was neceſſary in a ſtable, the firſt throne of his humility, and the gold was a good antidote againſt the preſent indigencies of his poverty: Such preſents as theſe were uſed in all the eaſt (eſpecially in Arabia and Saba, to which the growth of myrrh and frankincenſe were proper) in their addreſſes to their Gods and to their kings, with which under the veil of fleſh, they worſhipped the eternal word, the wiſdom of God under infant innocency, the almighty power in ſo great weakneſs, and the height of majeſty, and divine glory, under the lowneſs of human nature.

When the wiſe men had paid the tribute of their offerings and adoration, being warned in their ſleep by an angel, not to return to Herod, they returned into their own country another way, fully ſatisfied of the truth of what they had heard

and ſeen, and taught by this rare demonſtration which was made by Chriſt, that man's happineſs did not at all conſiſt in the affluence of worldly riches, poſſeſſions, and windy honour; having ſeen the eternal ſon of God poor and weak and uncloathed of all exteriour ornaments, they renounced the world, and retired into the receſſes of religion, and the delight of ſcience.

And now the bleſſed Saviour of the world, having aſſumed the nature of ſinful man, who had broken the divine commands, he was to put that nature into a ſavable condition, by fulfilling his Father's preceptive will, and then to reconcile it actually, by ſuffering the juſt deſervings of its prevarications; he therefore addreſſes himſelf to all the parts of an active obedience, and when eight days were accompliſhed for the circumciſing of the child, he expoſed his tender body to the circumciſing-knife, and ſhed his blood in drops, giving an earneſt of thoſe ſtreams of blood which he did afterwards pour out, for the cleanſing of human nature, and extinguiſhing the wrath of God. He had no ſin, nor was conceived by natural generation, and could have no ſtains in ſoul or body, which need be cleanſed by this myſtery, neither

indeed do we find it expreſſed that circumciſion was ordained for pardon of original ſin though it is preſumed ſo; but it was inſtituted to be a ſeal of a covenant between God and Abraham, and his poſterity; a ſeal of the righteouſneſs of faith, and therefore was not improper for him to ſuffer, who was the child of Abraham, and who was the prince of the covenant, and the Author and finiſher of that faith, which was promiſed to Abraham in circumciſion; but ſo myſterious were all the actions of Jeſus, that this one ſerved many ends. For 1. It gave demonſtration of the verity of human nature. 2. Hereby he began to fulfil the law. 3. It took from himſelf the ſcandal of uncircumciſion, which would eternally have prejudiced the Jews againſt the entertainment and communion with him. 4. He then took upon him that nature which declared him to be the Saviour of the world; which was as it were finiſhed in the blood of the circumciſion. For when the eight days were accompliſhed, his name was called Jeſus: This name his parents impoſed upon him, which the Angel told to his mother, a name above every name, for in old time God was known by the names of power, of nature, of Majeſty, but his name of Mercy was

eſerved till now, when God did purpoſe o pour out the whole treaſure of his mercy, by the miniſtry of his holy Son.

But this holy family longed till they might be permitted to addreſs to the temple, that there they might preſent the holy babe to his father, in his own houſe, for though while he was a child, he did differ nothing from a ſervant, yet he was lord of the place, it being his Father's houſe, and indeed, Lord of all. Therefore, when the days of the purification were accompliſhed they brought him to Jeruſalem, to preſent him to the Lord to whom he was holy, as being the firſt-born of his mother, the only begotten Son of his Father, and the firſt-born of every creature; and they did with him according to the law of Moſes, offering a pair of turtle doves for his redemption.

And as there was no publick act about this holy child, but it was attended by ſomething miraculous and extraordinary; at this inſtant the ſpirit of God directed Simeon, a holy perſon into the temple, that he might be ſenſible of the fulfilling of a prophecy made to himſelf, that before his death he might behold the Lord Chriſt, and embrace the glory and conſolation of Iſrael, and the light of the Gentiles in his

arms; and accordingly he ſpake glorious things of that child, and things alſo glorious concerning his mother; that the child was ſent for the riſing and falling of Iſrael; for a ſign that ſhould be ſpoken againſt; and the bitterneſs of that contradiction ſhould pierce the heart of his holy virgin mother like a ſword; that her joys might be a little allayed with the preſent revelation of her future trouble.

Old Anna the propheteſs came alſo in, full of years and joy, and found the reward of her inceſſant prayers and faſting in the temple, the long looked for redemption of Iſrael being now preſent, and ſhe with her eyes ſaw the light of the world, the heir of heaven, the long expected Meſſias, whom the nation had deſired, and waited for, till their hearts were faint, and their eyes were dim, as doubting he would be long in coming; ſhe alſo propheſied and gave thanks unto the Lord. But Joſeph and his mother marvelled at thoſe things which were ſpoken of him, and Mary having received the greateſt favours that any of the daughters of Adam ever did, and knowing from whence, and for whoſe glory ſhe had received it, returned the holy Jeſus in a preſent to God again, for ſhe had nothing ſo precious as himſelf to make

oblation of; and becauſe by the law of Moſes, every firſt-born among the males was to be holy to the Lord, the holy mother brought a pair of turtle-doves or pigeons to redeem the lamb of God from the Anathema, becauſe every firſt-born was to be offered to God, or redeemed if it was clean. This was a poor man's price, and the bleſſed Jeſus was never valued at a higher rate while he was upon earth. For he that was Lord of the univerſe, choſe his portion among the poor of this world, that he might advance the poor to the riches of his inheritance; for at his birth he was poor, at his circumciſion poor, like the likeneſs of a ſinner; at his preſentation poor, like a ſinner and ſervant, for he choſe to be redeemed at a very mean price.

Herod having long waited for the return of the wiſe men, to give him directions where to find the child, that his ſword might do certain execution upon him, when he ſaw he was mocked of them, he was exceeding wrath: And tho' he believed the divine oracles, foretelling that a king ſhould be born in Bethlehem, yet his ambition made him ſo ſtupid, that he attempted to cancel the decree of heaven. For if he did not believe the prophecies, why was he troubled? If he did believe them, how

could he poſſibly hinder the errand, which God had foretold himſelf would certainly bring to paſs? And therefore ſince Providence had prevented him from bathing his own ſword in the blood of the bleſſed child, he reſolved to ſend a ſword of indiſcrimination and confuſion, hoping that if he killed all the babes of Bethlehem, this young king's reign would alſo ſoon determine. He therefore ſent forth and ſlew all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the coaſts thereof, from 2 years old and under, according to the time which he had diligently enquired of the wiſe men; for this execution was in the beginning of the ſecond year after Chriſt's nativity, as in all probability we gueſs, not at the two years end, as ſome ſuppoſe; becauſe as his malice was ſubtle, ſo he intended it ſhould be ſecure, and was near the time of his computation.

The maſſacre was ſad, cruel and univerſal, no compaſſion was taken at the dreadful ſhrieks of the mother, no tender-hearted ſoldier was employed: no hard hearted perſon was ſoftened by the weeping eyes and piteous begging looks of thoſe mothers, that wondered how it was poſſible for any to hurt their pretty ſucklings, there was no protection, no defence againſt thoſe

ſavage butchers, no indulgence to any; inſomuch that Herod cauſed his own child, which was at nurſe in the coaſt of Bethlehem to bleed to death, (who as Philo the Jew writes) was deſcended by his mother's ſide of the tribe of Judah, which barbarous cruelty being told to Auguſtus, he ſaid, that in Herod's family, it were better to be an hog than a ſon, ſince being a Jew, he was forbid to kill or eat ſwine's fleſh, though he was not aſhamed to murder his child. The ſword being thus made ſharp by Herod's commiſſion, ſlaughtered fourteen thouſand innocent infants (as the Greeks in their Calendar, and the Abyſſenes of Ethiopia, do commemorate in their Liturgy.) For Herod, crafty and malicious, that is, a finiſhed tyrant, had cauſed all the children to be brought together, which the poor credulous mothers ſuppoſing was only deſigned to take an account of their age and number, in order to lay ſome tax upon every head, unknowingly ſuffered themſelves and their babes to be betrayed to an irremediable butchery. Then was fulfilled what was ſpoken of by Jeremiah the prophet, ſaying,—*Lamentation and weeping and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted.* All the inſtances of

ſadneſs were little enough to expreſs the great weeping, when fourteen thouſand mothers in one day, ſaw their pretty babes pouring forth their blood into that boſom, whence not long before they had ſucked milk, &inſtead of thoſe pretty ſmiles which uſed to endear their affections, nothing but affrighted ſhrieks and pale ghaſtly looks. The mourning was great, like the mourning in the valley of Hinnon, and there was no comforter; their ſorrow was too deep to receive any preſent conſolation, and nothing but length of time could allay their woful grief.

But the malice of Herod went farther, into the hill-country, and hearing that great things were ſpoken of John (called the Baptiſt) the ſon of Zachary, as if he was deſigned to ſome eminent miniſtry about this great prince, he deſigned to make void the prophecies concerning him alſo, and ſent a meſſenger of death to find him out. But the mother's early care prevented his deſign, by conveying her ſon into deſart places, where he continued till the time appointed for his manifeſtation unto Iſrael. But as the children of Bethlehem died in the ſtead of Chriſt, ſo did the father of the Baptiſt die for his child; for Herod ſlew Zachary between

the temple and the altar, becauſe he refuſed to betray his ſon to the fury of that raging beaſt, though ſome eminent primitive chriſtians had a tradition, that a place being ſeparated in the temple for virgins, Zachary ſuffered the bleſſed virgin to abide there after the birth of the holy Jeſus, affirming her to be ſtill a virgin, and that for this reaſon, not Herod, but the ſcribes and phariſees did kill Zachary.

Tertullian reports that the blood of Zacharyhad ſo beſmeared the ſtones of the pavement, which was the altar the good prieſt was ſacrificed on, that no art nor induſtry could waſh the tincture out, the dye and guilt being both indelible; and if becauſe God did intend to exact of that nation, all the blood of righteous perſons from Abel to Zacharias, who was the laſt of the martyrs of the ſynagogue, he would beara character of their guilt in their ſight, to upbraid their irreligion, cruelty and infidelity. Some there are, who affirm, that thoſe words of our bleſſed ſaviour do not relate to any Zachary who had been already ſlain, but to a prophecy of the laſt of all the martyrs of the Jews, who ſhould be ſlain immediately before the deſtruction of the laſt temple, & the extermination of their nation. Certain it is, that ſuch as Zachary,

the ſon of Baruch,(if we may believe Joſephus)was ſlain in the middle of the temple, a little before it was deſtroyed; and it is agreeable to the nature of the prophecy; and the reproof here given by our bleſſed ſaviour, that from Abel to Zachary,ſhould take in all the righteous blood, from firſt to laſt, till the iniquity was compleat; and it is not imaginable that the blood of our bleſſed Lord, and the apoſtle St. James, for whoſe death many of the Jews were of opinion God deſtroyed their city, ſhould be left out of the account, which would certainly be, if any other Zachary ſhould be meant than he whom they laſt ſlew; and therefore St. Cyprian expounds what we read in the paſt ſenſe, to ſignify the future, and inſtead of ye ſlew, reads, ſhall ſlay, according to the ſtile often uſed by prophets, and as ſometimes an uncertain ſignification will bear.

But the firſt great inſtance of the divine vengeance from thoſe executions was upon Herod, who in a very few years after, was ſmitten of God with ſo many plagues and tortures, that himſelf above ſeemed like an hoſpital of incurables; for he was tormented with a ſoft ſlow fire, like that of burning iron in his body; in his bowels with intolerable cholicks and ulcers; in

his ſhameful parts with worms; in his feet with gout; in his nerves with convulſions, difficulty of breathing, and out of divers parts of his body iſſued out ſo noiſome, ulcerous a ſtench, that the loathſomneſs, pain, and indignation, made him once ſnatch up a knife with purpoſe to have killed himſelf, but that he was prevented by a nephew of his who then attended him, but the heart of Herod was only the more hardened by the loads of divine wrath, God began his hell here, and the pains of hell never made any man leſs wicked. For Herod perceiving that he muſt now die, firſt put to death his ſon Antipater, under pretence that he would have poiſoned him; and that the laſt ſcene of his life, might, for curſed malice, and exalted villainy, out do all the reſt, becauſe he believed the Jewiſh nation would rejoice at his death, he aſſembled all the nobles of the people, and put them in priſon, giving ſtrict charge to his ſiſter Salome, that when he was at the point of death, they ſhould all be ſlain, that his death might be lamented with a real and univerſal ſorrow. But God that brings to naught the councils of wicked princes, turned the deſign againſt the intention of Herod; for when he was dead, and could not call his

ſiſter to account for diſobeying his bloody and unrighteous commands, ſhe releaſed all the impriſoned and deſpairing gentlemen; and made the day of her brother's death a perfect jubilee, a day of joy, ſuch as that when the Jews were delivered from the violence of Haman, in the days of Purim.

All this while God had provided a ſanctuary for the holy child Jeſus, who ſeeing the ſecret purpoſes of blood which Herod had contrived, ſent his angel, who appeared to Joſeph in a dream, ſaying—*Ariſe, and take the young child and his mother, and fly into Egypt, and be there until I bring thee word. For Herod will ſeek the young child to deſtroy him.* Then he aroſe and took the young child and his mother by night, and departed into Egypt. Joſeph and Mary inſtantly aroſe, and without enquiring how they ſhall live there, or when they ſhall return, or how be ſecured, or what accommodations they ſhall have in their journey, but in the night they began their pilgrimage with the chearfulneſs of obedience, and the confidence of hope, and the joys of love, knowing themſelves ſufficiently recompenced for all the trouble they could endure, by being inſtruments of the ſafety of the holy Jeſus. The an-

cient fathers ſay, they made their firſt abode in Hermopolis, in the country of Thebais, whither when they firſt arrived, the child Jeſus, being by deſign of Providence, carried into a temple, all the ſtatues of the idol gods fell down, like Dagon, at the preſence of the ark, and ſuffered their timely and juſt diſſolution and diſhonor, according to the prophecy of Iſaiah, *Behold, the Lord ſhall come into Egypt, and the idols of Egypt ſhall be moved at his preſence.* And in the life of the Prophet Jeremiah, written by Epiphanius, it is reported, that he told the Egyptian prieſts, that their idols ſhould be broken to pieces, when a holy virgin with her child, ſhould enter into their country, which prophecy, poſſibly might be the cauſe that the Egyptians, beſides their vain idols and falſe gods, did worſhip alſo an infant in a manger, and a virgin in her bed.

From Hermopolis to Maturæa thoſe holy pilgrims went for their ſafety and ſubſiſtence, where it was reported, they dwelt in a garden of balſam, till Joſeph being at the end of ſeven years (as it is commonly believed) aſcertained by an angel of the death of Herod, and commanded to return to the land of Iſrael, he was obedient to the heavenly viſion and returned; but

hearing that Archelaus reigned in his father's ſtead, and knowing the cruelty and ambition of Herod was hereditary, or intailed upon his ſon, he was warned to turn aſide to the parts of Gallilee, under the juriſdiction of Philip, the ſon of Herod alſo, where Archelaus had no authority; the holy family were not ſolicitous about their return, nordiſtruſtful ofdivine providence, but full of poverty, ſanctity and content, waited God's time, at the return of which God delayed not to recall them from exile, out of Egypt he called his ſon, and directed Joſeph's fear and courſe, that he ſhould drive to a place free from danger. And the ſame providence God expreſſes to all ſincere chriſtians, and will free them from all their pains, ſorrows, and troubles, if they wait his good time, and in the mean while do their duty, and depend upon his aſſiſtance; the holy Jeſus having gone before them, will aid them, and at length make their condition eternally happy.

From the return of this holy family to Judea, and their habitation in Nazareth, till the bleſſed child Jeſus was 12 years of age, we have nothing tranſmitted to us of any authentick record, but that they went to Jeruſalem every year at the feaſt of the paſſover. And when Jeſus was 12 years

old, and was in the holy city, attending upon the paſchal rites and ſolemn ſacrifices of the law, his parents having fulfilled their days of the feaſt, went homeward, ſuppoſing the child had been in the caravan among his friends, going before a whole day's journey; and when they ſought and found him not, they returned to Jeruſalem, full of tears and ſorrow, and for three days could not find him, at length entering into the temple to pray to God, who knew their deſire, changed their ſorrow into joy, and wonder, for there the mother found the holy ſon ſitting in the midſt of the doctors, both hearing them and aſking them queſtions, and when they ſaw him, they were amazed, and ſo were all that heard him, at his underſtanding and anſwers, beyond his education, beyond his experience, beyond his years, and even beyond the common attainments of the beſt men, diſcourſing with the ſpirit of a prophet, the demonſtration of an angel, and the heighth of inſpiration, for here in the very literal ſenſe, God out of the mouths of babes ordained ſtrength.

Glad were the parents of the child to find him initiated with a miracle, and when he gave them an account of his employment, which they underſtood not, ſaying,

How is it that ye ſought me? Wiſt ye not that I muſt be about my father's buſineſs. But Mary kept all theſe ſayings in her heart; and he went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was ſubject unto them. And Jeſus increaſed in wiſdom, and ſtature, and in favour with God and man; and no doubt lived in all holineſs and humility, ſhewing great ſigns of wiſdom, and thereby endeared himſelf to all that beheld his converſation, and confirmed them in the expectation which his miraculous birth had created of him; increaſing in proportion to his great beginnings to a miraculous excellency of grace, ſweetneſs of demeanor and excellency of underſtanding.

When Herod had drunk ſo deep a draught of blood at Bethlehem, and ſought for more from the hill country, Elizabeth carried her ſon John the Baptiſt, into the wilderneſs, there in the deſert places to hide from the fury of that beaſt, where queſtionleſs ſhe attended him with as much care and tenderneſs, as the affections and fears of a mother could expreſs in thoſe barren ſolitudes. It is recorded that the child was about eight months old when he firſt fled to this melancholy ſanctuary, but after forty days his mother di-

, and his father Zachary was slain at his iniſtration, which happened about this me, in the court of the temple ; ſo that e child was expoſed to all the dangers nd infelicities of an orphan, in a place of olitarineſs and diſcomfort, in a time when bloody king meditated his deſtruction ; ut when his father and mother were aken from him, the Lord took him p. For the Greeks have a tradition, that God deputed an angel to be his guardian nd nouriſher, as he had formerly done o Iſhmael, who dwelt in the wilderneſs ; nd to Elias, when he fled from the rage f Ahab, ſo to this child, who came in the pirit of Elias, to make demonſtration that here can be no want nor danger, where God undertakes the care and proviſion for his children.

The entertainment that he met with in the wilderneſs, was ſuch as might diſpoſe him to a life of auſterity, to holy contemplations, prayers and communion with God ; his raiment being of camel's hair, with a leathern girdle about his loins, and his meat was locuſts, and wild honey ; and thus he continued till he was about thirty years of age, and then in the fifteenth year of Tiberius, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judea, the word of God came unto

John in the wilderneſs, and he came into all Judea, preaching and baptizing. This John, according to the propheſies of him, and the deſignation of his perſon by the holy ghoſt, was the forerunner of Chriſt, ſent to diſpoſe the people for his entertainment and prepare his ways, whom all the Jewiſh writers of that time, mention with exceeding praiſe; and Joſephus who lived ſoon after the death of Chriſt, ſays, that he was a moſt excellent man of whom it was written by the prophet Malachi—*Behold I will ſend my meſſenger, and he ſhall prepare the way before me.* It was therefore neceſſary that he ſhould be a perſon of conſummate virtue and holineſs, that the purity of his life might gain credit and reputation to the teſtimony he was to give concerning his Lord, the ſaviour of the world, which happened accordingly.

For the baptiſt, while he was in the wilderneſs, became the pattern of a ſolitary, contemplative life, and an example of ſanctity and ſingular auſterity; ſo when he appeared to the world, he ſeemed to be a very extraordinary man, and the wonders which were great at his birth, and the prediction of his conception, which had never before happened, but in the perſons of Iſaac and Samſon, the contempt of the

world, his mortified countenance and deportment, his auſtere and ſolitary life, his vehement and zealous preaching, created ſo high an opinion of him in the people, that they held him for a prophet, and a rare example of an holy life; and that was rendered more awful by his ſolemn baptiſm, whereby he ſo prevailed, that he made apt and admirable preparations for the Lord's appearing, for there went out to him Jeruſalem, and all Judea, and all the regions round about Jordan and were baptized of him, confeſſing their ſins. By theſe heavenly means he ſo won upon the affections of all men, that his ſermons and teſtimony concerning Chriſt were the more prevalent and acceptable; the ſum of his diſcourſes tending to perſuade them to repent of their ſins, and to bring forth the fruits of an holy life; he was a ſevere reprehender of the Phariſees and Sadducees; he exhorted the people to do works of mercy; the Publicans to do juſtice, and oppreſs no man; the ſoldiers to abſtain from plundering, violence and repine; and publickly declaring that he was not Chriſt, that he only baptized with water, but the holy Jeſus ſhould baptize with the holy Ghoſt, and with fire, and finally denounced eternal wrath and puniſhment to all that

were impenitent; and from this day forward, that is from the day of John Baptist the kingdom of heaven ſuffered violence and the violent take it by force. For now the goſpel began to dawn, John being like the morning ſtar, foretelling the approach of the ſun of righteouſneſs, forasſaint John the baptiſt layed the firſt rough and unhewed ſtone in this ſpiritual building, in mortification, ſelf denial, and doing violence to our natural affections, ſo the maſter builder himſelf continued the ſame by propounding the glories of the heavenly kingdom, to thoſe only who by bearing the croſs ſhould obtain the ſame. Now was the time that multitudes ſhould throng and crowd to enter into the ſtraight gate; and the younger brothers, the Gentiles ſhould ſnatch the inheritance from the Jews our elder brothers; ſtrangers from natives; the Publicans and Harlots from the Scribes and Phariſees, who like violent perſons, ſhall by their importunity, obedience, watchfulneſs, and diligence, gain the kingdom from them to whom it was firſt offered, and Jacob ſhall be loved, and Eſau hated.

From the diſputation of Jeſus with the doctors, to the time of his manifeſtation to Iſrael, which was about 18 years, the holy

child dwelt in Nazareth, in great obedience to his parents, working, as is ſuppoſed, with his hands in his ſuppoſed father Joſeph's trade, for the ſupport of his own & his mother's neceſſities, and that he might bear the curſe of Adam, *that in the ſweat of his brows he ſhould eat his bread*; but now the full time being come, he took his leave of his mother and his employment, to begin his father's work, and his prophetical office, in order to the redemption of the world; and when John was baptized in Jordan, Jeſus came to John to be baptized of him. And tho' the baptiſt had never ſeen his face, becauſe they had been from their infancy driven to ſeveral places, and deſigned to ſeveral offices, yet the Holy Ghoſt immediately inſpired John with a diſcerning, knowing ſpirit, ſo that at his firſt arrival he knew him, and did him worſhip; ſo that when Jeſus deſired to be baptized, John forbid him ſaying *I have need to be baptized of thee, and comeſt thou to me?* But our bleſſed ſaviour, who told John that he came to fulfill all righteouſneſs, would receive that rite which his father had inſtituted in order to the manifeſtation of his ſon; and by this baptiſm he became known to John, ſo that now he pointed at his perſon in his ſermons and diſcourſes and by

calling him the Lamb of God, propheſied of his paſſion, and declared him to be the world's Redeemer, and the ſacrifice for mankind.

As ſoon as John had performed his miniſtry, and Jeſus baptized, he prayed, and the heavens were opened, and in the air appeared a new and glorious light, the Holy Ghoſt deſcended like a dove, and lighting upon him, and a voice from heaven, ſaying, *This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleaſed.* This was the inauguration and proclamation of the Meſſias, when hebegan to be the great prophet of the new covenant: the dove is inoffenſive, and feels no diſturbance nor violence of paſſions when its deareſt intereſts are deſtroyed, we alſo ought to be of an even ſpirit in the ſaddeſt accidentswhich uſually diſcompoſe our peace, and it is certain that wherever the holy ſpirit does dwell, there alſo peace and ſanctity, meeknefs and charity, a mortified will, and an abſolute abandoning our own inclinations and deſires do inhabit: Furthermore, this dove, like that which Noah ſent out of the Ark, did aptly ſignify, that the world ſhould be renewed, and alſo be turned to a new creation, & God hath made a covenant with us, that unleſs we provoke him by our impieties, he

will never deſtroy the earth any more.— When the ſolemnity of this baptiſm was over, Chriſt aſcended up out of the water, and ſome of the ancients report (but with what certainty we know not) that the place in that river where his holy body had been baptized, was indued with a healing quality, and a power of curing leapers that bathed themſelves therein, in the faith of Jeſus. But the manifeſtation of this power was not till afterwards, for as yet Jeſus did no miracles.

When the ſaviour of the world was baptized, had opened the heaven, which never yet had been opened to man, and was declared the ſon of God, Jeſus was by the ſpirit driven into the wilderneſs: not by an unnatural violence, but by a ſupernatural inſpiration and inclination, for it was the holy ſpirit that bare him thither; he was led by the good ſpirit to be tempted of the devil; whither he alſo retired to make demonſtration, that in an active life, ſuch as he was deſigned to theſe retirements for contemplation and prayer may be neceſſary, that we may thereby be enabled to teach others, when we have been converſing with God. In this deſart which was reckoned four miles from the place of his baptiſm, and about twenty from Jeruſalem,

he abode forty days and forty nights, where he was perpetually disturbed and assaulted with evil spirits, in the midst of wild beasts, in a continual fast, without eating, or drinking water; and the angels ministered unto him, being messengers of comfort, and sustentation from his father, for the support and service of his humanity, and employed in resisting and discountenancing the assaults and hostilities of the spirits of darkness.

Whether the devils appeared in any horrid and affrighting shape, is not certain; but it is more likely, that to a person of Christ's sanctity, they would appear more angelical, he not being to be affrighted with ugly phantasms, which abuse the weak and imperfect conceptions of ignorant people; by the way which satan the prince of devils took, was that at the expiration of forty days, Jesus being hungry, he invited him to eat bread of his own providing, which might refresh his humanity, and prove his divinity, hoping that his hunger, and the desire of convincing the devil, might tempt him to eat before the time appointed: But Jesus answered, *It is written, man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God*; meaning, that in every word of

God, whether the commandment be general or ſpecial, as promiſe is either expreſſed or implied of the ſupply of all proviſions neceſſary for him that is doing the work of God, and that was the preſent caſe of Jeſus, who was then doing his father's work, and promoting our intereſt, and therefore was ſure to be provided for, and ſo we may likewiſe, when we are performing our duty.

The devil having failed in this aſſault, tries him again, requiring ſtill a demonſtration of his being the ſon of God: He ſets him upon the pinnacle of the temple, and invites him to throw himſelf down; ſaying, *If thou be the ſon of God, caſt thyſelf from hence, for it is written, he ſhall give the angels charge concerning thee, to keep thee, and in their hands they ſhall bear thee up, leſt at any time thou daſh thy foot againſt a ſtone.* But tho' our ſaviour was ſecured of God's protection, yet he would not tempt God by requiring an extraordinary act of his providence, for his unneceſſary preſervation. At length ſatan unites all his power of ſtratagem, and places the holy Jeſus upon an exceeding high mountain, and by an angelical power, repreſents as in a map, all the kingdoms, glories, and beauties of this world, and aſſures Je-

ſus, that all this was put into his power to give, and would beſtow it on him, if he would fall down and worſhip him: But our bleſſed redeemer being provoked and angry at his vile propoſal, and his impudent and blaſphemous demands, ſaid, *Get thee hence, behind me, ſatan, for it is written, thou ſhalt worſhip the Lord thy God, and him only ſhall ye ſerve.* The devil then leaveth him, and behold, angels came and miniſtered unto him, bringing him ſuch things as his neceſſities required; after he had by a forty days faſt and abſtinence, left an example to his diſciples and followers, that faſting is neceſſary to a contemplative life, and for reſiſting and overcoming all temptations and allurements of the devil and all our ſpiritual enemies. And we may obſerve, that poverty, predeſtination and ambition are the three quivers from which the devil drew his arrows, with which he thought to prevail againſt Chriſt, but our captain conquered him both for himſelf and us, whereby we may ſee our danger, and how we are provided with a remedy againſt all temptations of the wicked one.

After the baptiſt by a ſign from heaven, was confirmed in ſpirit and underſtanding, that Jeſus was the Meſſias, he immediately

publiſhed to the Jews what God had manifeſted to him, and firſt to the prieſts and levites, who ſent a meſſenger from the Sanhedrim, or great council at Jeruſalem to know who he was: John anſwered immediately, that himſelf was not the Chriſt, nor Elias, nor that prophet whom they by a ſpecial tradition, did expect to be revealed they knew not when, and concerning himſelf, he ſaid nothing poſitive, but that he was the voice of one crying in the wilderneſs, make ſtraight the way of the Lord. This Lord was then amongſt them, but not known, a perſon of great dignity, the latchet of whoſe ſhoes he was not worthy to unlooſe, or do the meaneſt office under him, who tho' coming after John, was to increaſe, but the baptiſt was to decreaſe, who did baptize with the Holy Ghoſt and with fire.

This was the character of his perſonal prerogatives, but as yet no demonſtration was made of his perſon, till after the deſcent of the Holy Ghoſt upon him, and wherever the baptiſt ſaw Jeſus, he points him out with his finger. *Behold the lamb of God that taketh away the ſin of the World; This is he.* Then he ſhews him to Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, and to another diſciple with him, who both followed Jeſus,

and abode with him that night. Andrew brings his brother Simon with him, and Chriſt changes his name from Simon to Peter, or Cephas, which ſignifies a ſtone. Then Jeſus himſelf finds out Philip of Bethſaida, and bid him follow him, and Philip finds out Nathaniel, and calls him to ſee; thus like people that come out of darkneſs, when they ſee the ſun, they call to their parents to be partakers of this new and ſtrange revelation.

When Nathaniel was come to Jeſus, Chriſt ſaw his heart, and gave him a teſtimony of being truly honeſt, and full of holy ſimplicity, an Iſrealite indeed, in whom is no guile; and Nathaniel being overjoyed that he had found the Meſſias, believing out of love, and loving by reaſon of his joy, having no ſuſpicion of his perſon, and took his will, and the forwardneſs of his affection in ſuch good part, that he promiſed him greater things. And this gave occaſion to the firſt prophecy which was made him: for Jeſus ſaid unto him, *Becauſe I ſaid I ſaw thee under the fig-tree, believeſt thou: thou ſhalt ſee greater things than theſe.* And then prophecied, that he ſhould ſee heaven opened, and the angels of God aſcending and deſcending upon the ſon of man; but he being a Doctor of

the law, Chriſt did not chuſe him for one of his apoſtles.

About the ſame time there was a marriage at Cana of Galilee, in the neighbourhood of Chriſt's dwelling, where John the evangeliſt is by ſome ſuppoſed, tho' without certainty, to be the bridegroom, to which Jeſus with his mother being invited, he went to do civility to the perſons eſpouſed, and to honour the holy ordinance of marriage; the perſons then married were thought to be but of indifferent fortunes, richer in the love of their neighbours, than in wealthy poſſeſſions, they had more company than wine, which the bleſſed virgin mother acquainted Jeſus with; who anſwered her, *Woman, what have I to do with thee, mine hour is not yet come:* By this anſwer, intending no denial to his mother, but to ſignify he was not yet entered into the period and years of miracles, and when he did, it muſt not be for reſpect of kindred or civil relations, but deriving his power from above, it muſt be to ſerve that deſign which he had received in charge, together with that power.

And ſo his mother underſtood him, giving expreſs charge to the attendants, to do whatever he commanded; Jeſus therefore bid them fill the water-pots which

ſtood there for the uſe of frequent waſhings, which the Jews uſed in all publick meetings, for fear of contracting legal pollutions and impunities, wherein they ſeemed too ſuperſtitious, waſhing the very beds and tables employed at their feaſts. The ſervants filled them to the brim, and as they were commanded, drew out, and bare to the governor of the feaſt, who knew not of it, till the miracle grew publick, and the light ſhewed itſelf; for while they wondered at the management of the feaſt, in keeping the beſt wine till the laſt, it grew apparent that he who was Lord of his creatures, could produce new qualities in that ſubject, in which he chuſes to glorify his ſon. This beginning of miracles did Jeſus at Cana in Galilee. For all thoſe miracles that the popiſh legends report to be done by Chriſt in his infancy, and interval of his younger years are apocryphal & ſpurious, promoted by the credulity of ſuch perſons, in whoſe hearts eaſineſs, folly, and ſuperſtition are bound up; this firſt miracle manifeſted his glory, and his diſciples believed in him.

Immediately after this miracle, Jeſus abode a few days in Capernaum; but becauſe of the great feaſt of the paſſover, he aſcended to Jeruſalem, where he perform-

d an act of holy zeal in behalf of the ho-
or of the temple which divers merchants
nd exchangers of money made their bank
nd market, and brought beasts thither to
e sold for sacrifice against the great pas-
hal solemnity, at the sight of which our
aviour being moved with indignation,
made a whip of small cords, and drove the
beasts out of the temple, overthrew the ac-
counting tables, and commanded them
hat sold the doves, to take them from
hence. For his anger was holy, and
herefore would not have the doves let fly
to the detriment of the owners, saying
*Make not my father's house a house of mer-
chandize, for it shall be called a house of pray-
er to all nations:* And being required to
give a sign of his vocation, he only fore-
told the resurrection of his body after 3
days, but expressed it in the metaphor of
the temple. *Destroy this temple & I will build
it up in three days;* he spake of the temple
of Jerusalem, and it was never rightly con-
strued till it was accomplished.

At this publick convention or assembly
of the Jewish nation, Jesus did many mira-
cles, published himself to be the Messias,
and gained many disciples, among them
was Nicodemus, a doctor of the law, and
a ruler of the nation, he came by night to

Jeſus, and affirmed himſelf to be convinced by the miracles which he had ſeen, *for no man can do thoſe miracles which thou doeſt, except God be with him.* Jeſus then began to inſtruct him in the myſtery of regeneration, ſaying, *verily, verily, I ſay unto thee, except a man be born again, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.* This was ſtrange philoſophy to Nicodemus, but Jeſus bid him not to wonder, for this is not a work of humanity, but a fruit of God's ſpirit, for the ſpirit bloweth where it liſteth, like the wind, which is apparent in its effects, but ſecret in the cauſes and production thereof. Chriſt then ſays there are higher things and more myſterious for him to apprehend and believe; tells his own deſcent from heaven, foretells his death and aſcenſion, and the bleſſing of redemption which he came to work for mankind, preaches of the love of the father, the miſſion of the ſon, the rewards of faith, and the glories of eternity: He upbraids the unbelieving and impenitent, and declares the difference of an holy and corrupt conſcience, the ſhame and fear of the one, the confidence and ſeverity of the other, and this was the ſum of his ſermon to Nicodemus, which was the fulleſt of myſtery of any that ever he made, except that immedi-

ately before his paſſion ; all his other ſermons being more practical.

From Jeruſalem Jeſus goeth into the country of Judea, attended by divers diſciples, whoſe underſtanding were brought into ſubjection & obedience to him, upon confidence of the divinity of his miracles. There the diſciples received all that came and baptized them, as John at the ſame time did, and by that ceremony admitted them into the chriſtian diſcipline and inſtitution, according to the cuſtoms of the doctors & great prophets among the Jews, who baptizing their ſcholars was the ceremony of their admiſſion. And now the time was come that Chriſt muſt increaſe, and the baptiſt ſuffer diminution, for Chriſt came from above, and was above all, and the ſum of his doctrine was, that which he had ſeen and heard from the father, whom God ſent to that purpoſe ; to whom God had ſet his ſeal that it was true ; who ſpake the words of God, whom the father loved ; to whom he gave the ſpirit without meaſure, and into whoſe hands God had delivered all things; this was he whoſe teſtimony the world received not ; and that they might know not only what perſon they ſlighted, but how great ſalvation they alſo neglected ; John ſums up all his ſermons,

and finiſhes his miniſtry with this ſaying, *He that believeth on the ſon hath everlaſting life, and he that believeth not the ſon, ſhall not ſee life, but the wrath of God abideth on him.*

And now the baptiſt had fulfilled the office of bearing witneſs unto Jeſus, God was pleaſed to give him his writ of eaſe, and beſtowed on him his reward upon this occaſion: John who had learnt to deſpiſe the world, and all the flatteries and impertinencies thereof, did his duty juſtly, and without reſpect of perſons, &ashe reproved the people for their crimes and immoralities, ſo he ſpared not Herod the ſecond, then king of Judea, but told him plainly in his ſermons, that it was not lawful for him to marry Herodias, his brother Philip's wife: for this ſermon he felt the venomous fury of an enraged woman, and was caſt into priſon, and about a year after, was ſacrificed to the ſcorn and pride of a laſcivious mother, and her immodeſt daughter, being at the end of the ſecond year of Chriſt's preaching, beheaded by Herod's command, who would not retract his oath, becauſe of his honour, and a raſh vow he made in the midſt of his jolity and complacencies of his riotous dancings: His head was brought up in a diſh, and made a feſti-

val preſent to the young girl, who gave it to her mother, by whoſe advice ſhe demanded the murdering of him, a barbariſm before unknown in that country.

But the judgments of God, which ſleep not long, ſoon overtook Herod for having turned away his wife, who was the daughter of Aretus a king of Arabia Petræa, to obtain Herodias, he provoked her father to commence war with Herod, who accordingly defeated his whole army, and forced him to an inglorious flight, which the Jews generally believed to be a judgment on him for his unworthy & villainous execution of John the baptiſt, God in his wiſdom and ſeverity making one ſin to be the puniſhment of another, and neither of them both to paſs without a ſignature of a curſe; and Nicephorus reports, that this dancing daughter of Herodias paſſing over a frozen lake, the ice broke, and ſhe fell up to her neck in water, and her head was parted from her body by the violence of the fragments, and ſo periſhed, divine providence cauſing the judgment to be a repreſentation of her ſin: Herodias herſelf, with the adulterous Paramour Herod were baniſhed to Lyons in France, by decree of the Roman ſenate, where they lived ingloriouſly, and died miſerably! It is re-

corded, that when her daughter Salome brought the baptiſt's head to her, ſhe thruſt the tongue through with a needle, in revenge for what it had uttered againſt her; but ſhe herſelf paid the charges of her triumph.

When Jeſus had heard that John was caſt into priſon, and that the Phariſees were envious againſt himſelf, for the great multitude of people that reſorted to his baptiſm, which he miniſtered, not in his own perſon, but by the deputation of his diſciples, they finiſhing the miniſtration which himſelf began, (who, as one of the ancients reports) baptized the bleſſed virgin his mother, and Peter only; and Peter baptized Andrew, James, and John, and the others, he left Judea and came to Galilee, paſſing near Sychar, a city of Samaria; where in the heat of day, and wearineſs of his journey, he ſat down at the ſide of Jacob's well; whither, when his diſciples were gone to buy meat, a Samaritan woman cometh to draw water, of whom Jeſus aſketh ſome to cool and refreſh himſelf. Little knew the woman the excellency of the perſon that aſked ſo ſmall a charity, neither had ſhe learnt that a cup of cold water given to a diſciple ſhould be rewarded, and much rather ſuch a preſent to the Lord

himſelf, but proſecuted the ſpite of her nation, and inſtead of waſhing Jeſus' feet, and giving him drink, demanded of him, why he, being a Jew, ſhould aſk water of a Samaritan, for the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans.

The ground of the quarrel was this: in the ſixth year of Hezekiah Salmanaſar, king of Aſſyria, plundered Samaria, tranſported the Iſraelites to Aſſyria, and planted an Aſſyrian colony in the town and country, who by divine vengeance, were deſtroyed by lions, which no power of man could reſtrain or leſſen: The king of Aſſyria thought the cauſe was their not ſerving God according to the rites of Moſes' law; and therefore ſent a Jewiſh captive prieſt to inſtruct the remaining inhabitants in the Jewiſh religion; who ſo learned and practiſed it, that they ſtill retained the ſuperſtitious heathen rites, till Manaſſes, the brother of Jaddi the high-prieſt of Jeruſalem married the daughter of Sambellet, who was the governor under king Darius; Manaſſes being reproved for marrying a ſtranger, the daughter of an uncircumciſed Gentile, and admoniſhed to diſmiſs her, flies to Samaria, perſuades his father-in law to build a temple on mount Gerizim, introduces the rites of

daily ſacrifice, and makes himſelf high-prieſt. and began to pretend to be the true ſucceſſor of Aaron, and commences a ſchiſm, in the time of Alexander the great. From whence the queſtion of religion grew ſo high, that it begat diſaffection, anger, animoſities, quarrels, bloodſhed and murder, not only in Paleſtine, but wherever a Jew and a Samaritan had the ill fortune to meet; ſuch being the nature of men, that they think it the greateſt injury in the world when other men are not of their opinion; and that they pleaſe God moſt, when they are moſt furiouſly zealous; and no zeal better to be expreſſed, than by hating all thoſe whom they are pleaſed to think God hates.

This ſchiſm was perſecuted with the greateſt ſpite that ever any was; becauſe both parties were much given to ſuperſtition, and this was promoted by the conſtitution of their religion, conſiſting much in externals and ceremonies, without their improving them to any moral or ſpiritual ſenſe, or to charity, and therefore the Jews called the Samaritans accurſed; again, the Samaritans at the paſchal ſolemnity would at midnight, when the Jew's temple was open, ſcatter dead mens bones to prophane and defile the place, and both

would fight, & eternally diſpute the queſtion ; ſometimes referring it to an arbitrator, and then the conquered ſide would decline the arbitration after ſentence, which they did at Alexandria before Ptolomeus Philometer, and Andronicus by a moving oration, procured ſentenee again't Theodoſius and Sabbæus, the Samaritan advocates, the ſentence was given for Jeruſalem, and the ſchiſm increaſed and continued till the time of our ſaviour's conference with this woman.

And it was ſo implanted & fixed into their underſtandings, that when this woman perceived Jeſus to be a prophet, ſhe undertook a queſtion with him : *Our fathers worſhipped in this mountain, and ye ſay Jeruſalem is the place where men ought to worſhip.* Our ſaviour knew the ſchiſm was great enough already, and was not willing to make the breach wider, and though he gave teſtimony of the truth, that ſalvation is of the Jews, and we know what we worſhip, ye do not ; yet becauſe the occaſion of this queſtion was ſhortly to be removed, Jeſus takes this occaſion to preach the goſpel, and to reconcile before hand, the diſagreeing intereſts, and ſettle a revelation to be verified for ever, that neither here nor there by way of confinement, nor in one

country more than another, but wherever any man ſhall call upon God in ſpirit and truth, there he ſhall be heard.

The holy Jeſus then tells her of living water, of eternal ſatisfactions, of never thirſting again, of her own perſonal condition, as to her marriages; and declares himſelf to be the Meſſias; and then was interrupted by the coming of his diſciples, who wondered to ſee him talking with a woman; but ſhe being full of joy and wonder, left her water pot, and ran into the city, to publiſh the Meſſias; and immediately all the city came out to ſee; and many believed on him, upon the teſtimony of the woman, and more when they heard his own diſcourſes; they invited him to the town, and received him with kindneſs & hoſpitality for two days, after which he departed to his own town Galilee; where he was entertained with reſpect, becauſe of the miracles which the Galileans ſaw done by him at the feaſt, and being at Cana where he wrought the firſt miracle, a noble perſon (a little king or ruler) came to Jeſus with much reverence, and importunity, deſiring that he would immediately come down to his houſe, to heal his ſon who was at the point of death. Jeſus who did not work

miracles by natural means, cured the child at diſtance, and diſmiſſed the prince, telling him his ſon lived, & by the account of his ſervants, he found that the child revived at the ſame time when theſe healing words were ſpoken by Jeſus, upon which he and all his houſe became Chriſt's diſciples.

Our ſaviour then left Nazareth and came to Capernaum, a maritime town of great reſort chuſing that for his ſcene of preaching, & place of dwelling. For now the time was fullfilled, the office of the baptiſt was expired, and the kingdom of God was at hand, he therefore preached the ſum of the goſpel, faith and repentance, repent and believe the goſpel, and what that goſpel was, the ſum and ſubſtance of all his ſermons afterward declared. Jeſus now ſaw it convenient to chuſe diſciples to his miniſtry and ſervice in the work of preaching; and to be witneſſes of that he ſhould ſay, do, or teach for ends which were afterwards made publick; Jeſus therefore as he walked by the ſea of Galilee, called Simon and Andrew, who knew him before by the preaching of John, and now left their ſhip & their nets & followed him. When he was gone a little farther, he calls two ſons of Zebedee, James and John, and

they went after him. And with this family he goes up and down the whole Galilee, preaching the goſpel of the kingdom, healing all manner of diſeaſes, curing demoniaks cleanſing lepers and giving ſtrength to thoſe that had the palſy, and lame perſons.

But when the people preſſed on him to hear the word of God, he ſtood by the lake of Genaſaret, and preſently entering into Simon's ſhip, commanded him to launch into the deep, & from thence he taught the people, and there wrought a miracle. For being Lord of the creatures, he commanded the fiſhes of the ſea, and they obeyed; for when Simon who had fiſhed all night in vain let down his net at the command of Jeſus, he incloſed ſo great a number of fiſhes, that the net brake, and the fiſhermen were amazed and ſurprized at ſo great a draught; by which miracle it was intended that a repreſentation ſhould be made of the church of Chriſt, and the multitudes of believers, who ſhould be taken by Simon and the other diſciples who were hereby conſigned to be fiſhers of men, and by their holy doctrines ſhould gain ſouls to God, and that when the net ſhould be drawn to ſhore, and ſeparation be made at the day of judgment by the

angels, they and their diſciples ſhould enter into the joy of the Lord, and the wicked receive the portion of reprobates. And now the fame of Jeſus went into all Syria, and there came to him multitudes from Galilee, Decapolis, Jeruſalem and Judea; and all that had any ſick with divers diſeaſes, brought them to him, and he laid his hands on every one of them, and healed them; and when he cured the lunaticks, and perſons poſſeſſed with evil ſpirits, the Devil cried out and confeſſed him to be Chriſt, the ſon of God, but he ſuffered them not: chooſing rather to work faith in his diſciples by moral arguments and demonſtrations of the ſpirit, than by the forced teſtimony of accurſed and unwilling ſpirits.

When Jeſus ſaw his aſſembly full, and his audience numerous, he went up into a mountain, and when his diſciples came to him, he made that admirable ſermon, called, the ſermon upon the mount; which is a divine compendium of ſuch excellent truths, and contains a breviary of thoſe moral precepts given by Moſes, and enlarging their obligation by a ſtricter ſenſe, and more ſevere expoſition; that their righteouſneſs ought to exceed the righteouſneſs of the Scribes and Phariſees,

preaches perfection, and the doctrines of meekneſs, and poverty of ſpirit, chriſtian mourning, deſire of holy things, mercy and purity, peace and ſuffering injuries: affixing a ſpecial promiſe of bleſſing to be the inheritance of thoſe who are endued with theſe ſpiritual graces and excellencies, he explains ſome parts of the ten commandments, and adds precepts of his own. He teaches his diſciples to pray, how to faſt, how to give alms: contempt of the world, not to judge others, forgiving injuries; againſt covetouſneſs and worldly love; of brotherly reproof, of the ſtraight gate, and narrow way; of falſe prophets; againſt hypocriſy; concluding with an exhortation to true piety; and that men ſhould ſee the kingdom of heaven, and the righteouſneſs thereof.

When Jeſus came down from the mountain, having ended his ſermon, a poor leprous man came and worſhipped him, and begged to be cleanſed, which Jeſus ſoon granted; engaged him not to publiſh it when he ſhould go abroad, but ſent him to the prieſt, to offer the gift according to the law of Moſes: he then came to Capernaum, and taught in their ſynagogues upon the ſabbath day, where in his ſermons he expreſſed the dignity of a pro-

phet and the authorityof a perſon ſent from God, there he cures one poſſeſs'd with an evil ſpirit, and afterward the mother of Simon of a fever, and multitudes beſetting Simon's houſe, he cured them all, and retired very early in the morning to a deſart place, that he might have an opportunity to pray without being diſturbed with the noiſe of the people; yet neither could he be ſo hid, for the multitude found him out by their diligent attendances of him, but Jeſus told them plainly, he muſt preach the goſpel to other cities alſo, and therefore reſolved to paſs to the other ſide of the lake of Genaſareth, whither while he was going, a Scribe offered himſelf to be his diſciple, and that he would go with him whereſoever he went; but Chriſt told him his condition was worſe than the foxes or the birds of the air, who had habitations provided, but he had none; no not a place to lay his head, and find reſt; but what became of this forward profeſſor afterward we know not. Others Jeſus bound to a ſpeedy profeſſion, not ſuffering one to go home to bid his friends farewell, and another not ſo much as to bury his dead.

By that time Jeſus was got into the ſhip it was late, and he ſo heavy to ſleep, that the violent ſtorm which happened could not

awake him, till the ſhip being almoſt covered with the waves, and in danger of being ſunk. The diſciples then awaked him, ſaying, maſter, careſt thou not that we periſh, and immediately there was a great calm, and they preſently arrived in the land of the Gadarenes, near the city of Gadara, where there were many ſepulchres in the hollowneſs of the rocks, in which the dead were buried, where many ſuperſtitious perſons uſed to invocate evil ſpirits; inſomuch, that at the inſtant of our ſaviour's arrival in the country, there met him two poſſeſſed with devils from thoſe tombs, exceeding fierce, and had ſo been a long time, inſomuch that no man durſt paſs that way: Jeſus commanded the devils out of the poſſeſſed perſons, but there were certain men feeding ſwine, which tho' extremely abominated by the Jewiſh religion, yet for the uſe of the Roman armies and quartering of ſoldiers, they were permitted, and divers privileges granted to the maſters of ſuch herds; he gave them leave, and the ſwine ran violently down a ſteep place, into the hot-baths, which were at the foot of the hill on which Gadara was built and periſhed in the waters. The accident ſo troubled the inhabitants, that they came and intreated Jeſus to de-

part out of the coaſts; ſo leaving Galilee of the Gentiles, he came to the leſſer Galilee, and while he was ſitting in an houſe which was ſurrounded with multitudes of people, a man ſick of the palſy was brought thither to be cured; and they were feign to untile the houſe and let him down in his bed with cords in the midſt before Jeſus, who was confering with his doctors: When Chriſt ſaw their faith, he ſaid, *man thy ſins are forgiven thee.* At which saying the Phariſees being troubled, thinking it to be blaſphemy, and that none but God could forgive ſins; Jeſus to verify his pardon, gave them a palpable demonſtration of it; for the Jews did believe, that all afflictions were puniſhment for ſin, and therefore they ſaid in another caſe, *Who ſinned, this man or his father that he was born blind?* And that removing of the puniſhment, was forgiving of the ſin, and therefore Jeſus to prove that his ſins were forgiven him, removed that which they ſuppoſed to be the effect of his ſin; and by curing the palſy prevented their further murmur about his pardon, ſaying that ye might know the ſon of man hath power on earth to forgive ſins: he ſaith to the ſick of the palſy, *Ariſe, take up thy bed and walk*; and the man aroſe, and was healed, and glorified God.

A while after Jeſus went again toward the ſea, and on his way ſeeing Matthew the Publican ſitting at the receipt of cuſtom, he bid him follow him; Matthew firſt feaſted Jeſus, and then he became his diſciple; but the Phariſees that were with him, began to be concerned that he eat with Publicans and ſinners: For the office of the Publicans, tho' amongſt the Romans it was honeſt and of great account, and the flower of the Roman Knights, the ornament of the city, the ſecurity of the common-wealth, was accounted to conſiſt in the ſociety of the Publicans: yet among both the Jews and Greeks, the name was odious, and the perſons were accurſed, not only becauſe the chief of them were ſtrangers, but becauſe the Jews eſpecially ſtood upon the charter of their nation, and the privilege of their religion, that none of them ſhould pay tribute, and alſo becauſe they were very unjuſt and great oppreſſors, having a power unlimited, and covetouſneſs as greedy as the grave. But Jeſus gave ſuch an account of the reaſon of his converſing with them, becauſe they were ſinners, that it was as if a phyſician ſhould be removed for having ſo much to do with ſuch perſons, for therefore was he ſent, not to call the righteous but ſinners

to repentance, to advance the reputation of mercy above the rites of the ceremonial law.

When Jeſus was diſcourſing with the Phariſees, Jairus, a ruler of the ſynagogue came to him, deſiring he would help his daughter who lay a dying. As he was going to the houſe, a woman met him who had been diſeaſed with an iſſue of blood 12 years, without hope of remedy, from art or nature; upon the confident perſuaſions of an holy faith, ſhe runs to him, thinking that if ſhe could but touch the hem of his garment, ſhe ſhould be whole; and accordingly upon the touch, the fountain of her blood was dried up and ſhe felt in her body that ſhe was healed of that plague. St. Ambroſe ſays, that this woman was Martha, yet it was not likely that ſhe was a Jew, but a Gentile, becauſe of that return which ſhe made in memory of her cure and the honour of Jeſus, according to the Gentile rites. For Euſebius reports that himſelf ſaw at Ceſarea Philippi, a ſtatue of braſs, repreſenting a woman kneeling at the feet of a goodly perſonage, who held his hand out to her, in a poſture of granting her requeſt, and doing favour to her; and the inhabitants ſaid it was erected by the care and coſt of this woman;

and that at the pedeſtal of this ſtatue a plant did grow, which was medicinal in the diſeaſe ſhe was cured of, and many others. This ſtory ſeems not well grounded, ſince two evangeliſts affirm, that ſhe had ſpent all her ſubſtance upon phyſicians; and was therefore uncapable of being at ſo much charge; neither would the heathen princes have ſuffered to ſtand ſo many years, who ſtrictly ſearched all places, to diſcover, and demoliſh all monuments of chriſtianity; and therefore probably theſe figures which Euſebius ſaw, were erected upon ſome heathen ſtory or ceremony, and by the chriſtians in after ages, confidently applied to the preſent hiſtory of this woman.

When Jeſus was come to the ruler's houſe, he found the minſtrels making their funeral noiſes for the death of Jairus's daughter, of which his ſervants had acquainted him, yet Jeſus turned out the minſtrels, and entered with the parents of the child into her chamber, and taking her by the hand, he called her, and awakened her from the ſleep of death, and commanded them to give her meat to eat, and enjoined them not to publiſh the miracle; but the more Jeſus endeavoured not to be popular, and to ſuppreſs the noiſ-

es and reports of his acts, the more they were discoursed of and published about the country. As he came from Jairus's house, he cured two blind men, upon their petition and confession, that they did believe in him. And cast out a dumb devil so much to the wonder and amazement of the people, that the Pharisees could hold no longer, being ready to burst with fury, and said, he cast out devils by the help of the devils. Their malice being contradictory and unreasonable, as if the devil should contrive the destruction of his own kingdom. This was the first eruption of their rage, for all the last year, which was the first of Jesus' preaching, all was quiet, neither the Jews nor the Samaritans, nor the Galileans did malign his doctrine or person, but he preached with much peace on all hands, for this was the year which the prophet Isaiah called in his prediction, the accepted year of the Lord.

The first year of Jesus, which was a year of peace and undisturbed preaching, being expired, there was a feast of the Jews, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem, this feast was the second passover to be kept after he began to preach; not the feast of Pentecost or tabernacles, both

which were paſſed before Jeſus came laſt from Judea, whither when he was now come, he finds an impotent perſon lying at the pool of Bethſada, waiting till the angel ſhould move the waters, after which whoſoever firſt ſtepped in, was cured of his infirmity. The poor man had waited 38 years,& ſtill was prevented by ſome other that needed a phyſician; but Jeſus ſeeing him, had pity on him, cured him, and bid him take up his bed and walk; this cure happened to be wrought upon the ſabbath, at which the Jews were ſo moved with indignation, that they thought to ſlay him, and their danger was the more outrageous by his calling himſelf the ſon of God, and making himſelf equal with God, upon which occaſion Jeſus diſcourſes on his miſſion, and authority from the father, and the union which was between them; and preaches life and ſalvation to them that believe in him; propheſies of the reſurrection of the dead, by the efficacy of the voice of the ſon of God; ſpake of the day of Judgment, and the differing conditions of the righteous and the wicked; confirms his words and miſſion by the teſtimony of John the Baptiſt, Moſes and other ſcriptures.

But ſtill the ſcandal riſes higher againſt

him, for the disciples going through the corn-fields, pull ripe ears on the sabbath day, and rubbing them in their hands, eat them to satisfy their hunger, for which he endeavoured to convince the Jews, who were highly offended, that works of necessity and mercy are to be done at all times, notwithstanding any positive command to the contrary, and the best serving of God upon any day whatsoever, or any part of the day, that is vacant from other offices, and proper for a religious festival. But when neither reason nor religion would satisfy them, but that they went about to kill him, he withdrew from Jerusalem, and returned from Galilee, whither the Scribes and Pharisees followed him, strictly observing whether he would again perform an act of mercy upon the sabbath day, which yet he still resolved to do, for entering into one of the synagogues, he saw a labouring man with a withered hand, who desired help of him, that he might again be restored to the use of his hands, lest he should be compelled with misery & shame to beg his bread. Jesus restor'd his hand as whole as the other, in the midst of all those spies and enemies; upon which act, being confirmed in their malice, the Pharisees went forth, and joined with the He-

rodians (a ſect of people who ſaid Herod was the Meſſias, becauſe when the ſcepter departed from Judah, he was declared king) and both together took council how they might kill him. Jeſus therefore again departed to the ſea coaſt, and as his fame, ſo his company increaſed; for he was now followed by new multitudes from Galilee, from Judea, from Jeruſalem, from Idumæa, from beyond Jordan, and from about Tyre and Sidon; who hearing the report of his miraculous power to cure all diſeaſes by the word of his mouth, or the touch of his hand, or the handling of his garment, came with a whole hoſpital of ſick, poſſeſſed, and all other diſeaſes, and were all immediately cured; the devils confeſſing publicly, that he was the ſon of God, till they were all, upon ſuch occaſions, reſtrained and compelled to ſilence.

Jeſus having now commanded a ſhip to be in readineſs againſt the preſſures of the multitude, went up into a mountain to pray, and continued in prayer all night, and the next day choſe out of the number of his diſciples twelve to be apoſtles, namely Simon, Peter, and Andrew, James the John, the ſons of thunder, Philip and Bartholomew, Matthew and Thomas,

James the ſon of Alpheus, and Simon the zealot, Judas the brother of James, and Judas Iſcariot. With theſe deſcending from the mountain to the plain, he inſtructs his apoſtles in the doctrine of the kingdom, for now becauſe he ſaw Iſrael ſcattered like ſheep, having no ſhephard, he propoſed to ſend theſe abroad to preach repentance, and that his kingdom was at hand, and gave them alſo particular inſtructions for their journey; for Jeſus ſent them out two by two, giving them power over all unclean ſpirits, and to heal all manner of ſickneſs and diſeaſes; telling them they were the light, and the eyes, and the ſalt of the world; ſo intimating their duty to be diligent, holy & uncorrupt, giving them in charge, to preach the goſpel, to diſpenſe their power and miracles freely as they had received it; to anoint the ſick perſons with oil, not to enter into any Samaritan town, but to go rather to the loſt ſheep of the houſe of Iſrael; to provide nothing for their journey, but to depend upon the piety and charity of the new converts; he arms them againſt perſecution; gives them leave to fly from one city to another, promiſes them the aſſiſtance of his ſpirit, encourages them by his own example of long ſuffering; by inſtances of the divine pro-

vidence, expreſſed even to creatures of the ſmalleſt value, and by promiſe of great rewards, to the valiant confeſſion of his name; and promiſes great retributions, not only to them who loſe any thing of value, for the ſake of Jeſus, but to thoſe that did beſtow but a cup of cold water upon a thirſty diſciple. And with theſe inſtructions they departed to preach to the cities, Jeſus then returning to Capernaum, received the addreſs of a faithful centurian, of a legion, (called, the iron legion, which uſually quartered in Judea) in behalf of his ſervant whom he loved, who was grievouſly afflicted with the palſy, and healed him as a reward and honor to his maſter's faith. And from hence going to the city Nain, he raiſed to life the only ſon of a widow, whom the mourners followed in the ſtreet, bearing the corpſe with lamentations to the grave. Upon the fame of theſe, and divers other miracles, John the Baptiſt who was ſtill in priſon (for he was not put to death until the latter end of this year) ſent two of his diſciples to him, enquiring if Jeſus was he that ſhould come, or ſhould we look for another. To whom Jeſus returned no poſitive anſwer, but a demonſtration from the nature of the thing, and the glory of the miracles,

ſaying, return to John, and tell him what you ſee, for the deaf hear, the blind ſee, the lame walk, the dead are raiſed, and the lepers are cleanſed, and to the poor the goſpel is preached, which were the diſtinguiſhing characters of the Meſſias, according to the predictions of the holy prophets.

When John's diſciples were gone with this anſwer, Jeſus began to diſcourſe of the authority and holineſs of John's perſon, the greatneſs of his office, and the divinity of his commiſſion, ſaying, that he was greater than a prophet, a burning and ſhining light, the Elias that was to come; and the conſummation or ending of the old prophets; adding withal, that the perverſeneſs of that age was moſt unaccountable in the entertainment of himſelf and the Baptiſt, ſince John who came thither eating and drinking, that by his auſterity and mortified deportment he might engage the judgments and affections of the people, nor Jeſus who came both eating and drinking, that by an affable life, framed to the compliance and common uſe of men, he might ſweetly inſinuate into the minds of the multitude, yet neither of them could obtain belief amongſt them; they objected againſt every thing, and no-

thing could pleaſe them, but wiſdom and righteouſneſs is juſtified of all her children.

Jeſus then proceeds to a ſevere reprehenſion of Capernaum, Chorazin and Bethſaida, for their pertinacious obſtinacy in their ſins and infidelity, in defiance of all the mighty works which he had wrought amongſt them. However, Jeſus glorified God for the magnifying of his mercy, that thoſe things which were hid from the wiſe, mighty and noble, who were not fit ſubjects, for the ſimplicity of the goſpel, were revealed to babes, and concludes his ſermon with an invitation to all weary and diſconſolate perſons, loaded with a ſenſe of their ſin and miſery, to come to him, promiſing eaſe to their burden, and refreſhment to their wearineſs, and to change their heavy preſſures into an eaſy yoke, and a light burden.

When Jeſus had ended his ſermon, one of the Phariſees, named Simon, invited him to eat with him; into whoſe houſe when he was entered, a certain woman that was a ſinner, abiding there in the city, heard of it, her name was Mary, ſhe had been married (ſays the primitive writers) to a noble perſonage, a native of the town and caſtle of Magdal, from whence

ſhe had her name of Magdalen, though ſhe herſelf was born in Bethany; a widow ſhe was, and prompted by her wealth, liberty and youth, to lead an intemperate life, and too free in her entertainments.—She came to Jeſus in the Phariſee's houſe, not as the ſtaring multitude, to glut her eyes with the ſight of a miraculous and glorious perſon, nor as the centurion, or the Syrophænician, or the ruler of the ſynagogue, for the cure of her ſickneſs, or in behalf of her friend or child, or ſervant, but ſhe who is the only example of her ſo coming, approaching him with remorſe and regret for her ſins; ſhe came to Jeſus to lay her burden at his feet, and to preſent him with a broken heart, and a weeping eye, with great affection, and a box of precious ointment (called Nard piſtic) ſalutary and excellent, ſhe came trembling, and fell down before him weeping for her ſins, pouring out a flood great enough to waſh the feet of the bleſſed Jeſus, and wiping them with the hairs of her head, after which ſhe broke the box, and anointed his feet with the ointment, which expreſſed ſo great an ecſtacy of love, ſorrow and adoration, that it was thought by Judas an unneceſſary profuſion, and was a preſent for a prince; an alabaſter box

of nard piſtic being ſent as a rarity from Cambyſes to the king of Ethiopia.

Simon obſerving this ſinner to expreſs ſuch religion and veneration to Jeſus, he thought within himſelf, this is no prophet, that did not know her to be a ſinner, or no juſt perſon that would ſuffer her to touch him, for though the Jews' religion did permit harlots of their own nation to live, and enjoy the Jewiſh privileges, ſave that their offerings were refuſed; yet the Phariſees who pretended to a greater degree of ſanctity than others, would not admit them to civil uſages, or the benefits of ordinary ſociety, and thought religion itſelf, and the honor of a prophet was concerned in this ſort of preciſeneſs; and therefore Simon made an objection within himſelf. But Jeſus knowing his thoughts as well as words, made an apology for her in the parable of the two debtors, a greater and a leſſer, concluding that they would love their merciful creditor, in proportion to his mercy and forgiveneſs, and this was the caſe of Mary Magdelen, to whom becauſe much was forgiven, ſhe loved much, and expreſſed it in ſuch large characters, that the Phariſee might obſerve the vaſt difference between his own common entertainment, compared with her magnificence, penitence and charity.

When Jeſus had dined, he was preſented with the ſad ſight of a poor man poſſeſſed with a dumb and blind devil, whom his friends deſired our ſaviour to caſt out, which was done immediately, to the amazement of the people, who run after him in ſuch great numbers, that the Phariſees much doubted, that this prophet would much leſſon their reputation, and leave their ſchools empty, and therefore gave out that he was beſide himſelf. Upon which rumour, his mother with his friends, and kindred came to ſee him, and found the houſe ſurrounded with the people, who were full of wonder and admiration, & there the virgin mother heard part of her own prophecy verified, that the generations of the earth ſhould call her bleſſed; for a woman worſhipping Jeſus, cried out, *Bleſſed is the womb that bare thee, and the paps that gave thee ſuck.* To this Jeſus replied, yet not denying her to be highly bleſſed who had received the honour of being the mother of the Meſſias, but advancing the dignity of ſpiritual excellencies far above the greateſt temporal honor in the world; *Yea, rather are they that hear the word of God, and do it.* And therefore when it was told him in the houſe, that his mother and his brethren ſtaid for him

without, he anſwered, that thoſe dear names of mother and brethren are far more ſacred when there is a conjunction of perſons in ſpiritual bands, in the ſame faith, the ſame hope, and in union with the ſame myſtical head; and pointing to his diſciples, ſaid *My mother and my brethren, for whoſoever doth the will of my father which is in Heaven, he is my brother and ſiſter and mother.*

And now the Phariſees upon the occaſion of theſe miracles, renewed the old quarrel, ſaying, *He caſt out devils by Belzebub, the prince of devils*, which ſenſeleſs and illiterate objection, Chriſt having confuted, charged them highly with the guilt of an unpardonable ſin, telling them, that their affirming thoſe actions of his, performed by virtue of the divine ſpirit, were done by the help of the devil, was a ſin againſt the holy ghoſt, and how bold ſoever they were with the ſon of man in abuſing his words, or injuring his perſon, they might upon repentance find a pardon, yet to ſin againſt the holy ghoſt, would find no forgiveneſs, neither here, nor hereafter; but taking occaſion upon this diſcourſe, he by an ingenious and myſterious parable, gives the world great caution of backſliding after repentance, for if the de-

vil returns into an houſe once ſwept and garniſhed, he bringeth ſeven ſpirits more impure than himſelf, and the laſt end of that man is worſt than the firſt.

Jeſus then goeth from the houſe of the Phariſees, to the ſea of Tiberias, and ſitting in a ſhip, taught the people on the ſhore by parables, under which were myſterious ſenſes, tending to ſhew their unbelief, tho' not to diſperſe that thick Egyptian darkneſs, which their ſins and abberrations had contracted; by the parable of the ſower ſcattering his ſeed by the way ſide, ſome on ſtony, ſome on thorny, and ſome on good ground, he intimated the ſeveral capacities or indiſpoſitions of mens hearts, the careleſſneſs of ſome, the forwardneſs and levity of others, the eaſineſs and ſoftneſs of a third, and how they were choaked with worldly cares, with the ſeveral ways whereby men miſcarry, and that but one ſort of perſons receive the word, and bring forth the fruits of an holy life; by the parable of the tares permitted to grow among the wheat, he intimated the toleration of diſſenting opinions, not deſtructive to piety, or civil ſociety, by the three parables of the ſeed growing inſenſibly; of the grain of muſtard ſeed ſwelling up to a tree; of a little leaven qualifying the whole

lump, he ſignified increaſe of the goſpel, and the bleſſing upon the ſermons of himſelf and his apoſtles.

To theſe parables which he rendered to his diſciples in their proper ſenſes, he added two more concerning the dignity of the goſpel, comparing it to treaſure hid in the field, and a jewel of great price, for the purchaſe of which every good merchant muſt part with all he hath, rather than not to obtain it. He adds, that the public profeſſors of chriſtianity, ſhould be like a mixt multitude, like a net incloſing fiſhes good and bad. After theſe diſcourſes, he retired from the ſea ſide, to his own city Nazareth, where he preached ſo excellently upon certain words in the prophet Iſaiah, that all the people wondered at his wiſdom in explaining the ſame. But the men of Nazareth did not ſufficiently honor their prophet, though their own countrymen, ſtill retaining in their minds the diſadvantages of his youth and kindred, and trade and poverty, and the humility of his firſt years, though now a glorious prophet. But Jeſus in his ſermon, reproved them for their infidelity, at which they wondered, and therefore did few miracles in reſpect of what he had done at Capernaum, and commended that

city before Nazareth, whereupon the inhabitants thruſt him out of the city, and led him to the brow of an hill, on which it was built, deſigning to throw him down headlong, but his work was not yet finiſhed; therefore paſſing through the midſt of them he went his way.

He then travelled up and down to all the towns and caſtles of Galilee, attended by his diſciples, and certain women out of whom he had caſt unclean ſpirits, namely, Mary Magdalen, Joanna, wife to Chuze, Herod's ſteward, who miniſtred unto him of their own ſubſtance, and became part of his holy family, which at this time began to be full, becauſe now the apoſtles were returned from their preaching, full of joy, that the devils were made ſubject to the words of their mouth and the efficacy of their prayers, and their calling upon the name of Jeſus, but their maſter intimated to them, that theſe privileges were not ſolid foundations for an holy joy, but only as they advanced the glory of God, and their own ſalvation, whoſe names are written in heaven, which joy was the reaſonable, holy, true, and perpetual joy.

When Herod heard ſuch wonderful things of Jeſus, his guilt made him imagine that John the Baptiſt had now riſen

from the dead, and theſe mighty works were demonſtrations of his power, which was increaſed by his immortality, for a little before this (as is already mentioned) Herod had ſent to the caſtle of Macherus, where John was priſoner, and cauſed him to be beheaded. The head Herodius buried in her own palace, thinking to ſecure it from any reunion with the body, leſt he ſhould again diſturb her unlawful luſts, and diſquiet Herod's conſcience, but the body the diſciples of John obtained, and carried it with honor and ſorrow, and buried it in Sebaſta, in the confines of Samaria, making his grave between the bodies of Elizeus and Abadias the prophets.

Jeſus knowing of the death of the Baptiſt, Herod's jealouſy, and the envy of the Phariſees, retired into a deſart place, together with his apoſtles, for the people ſo preſſed upon them, that they had not leiſure to eat; yet neither could he there be hid, for the multitudes flocked thither alſo, to whom he preached many things, and afterwards, becauſe there was no villages in the neighborhood, leſt they ſhould faint in returning to their houſes, he cauſed them to ſit down upon the graſs, and with five loaves of barley, and two ſmall fiſhes, he ſatisfied five thouſand men, beſides wo-

men and children, and cauſed his diſciples to gather up the fragments, which being brought together, filled twelve baſkets, which miracle was ſo accomodated to the underſtanding and affections of the people, that they were convinced this was the Meſſias, who was come into the world, and had a purpoſe to have taken him by force, and made him king.

But he that left his father's kingdom to take upon him the miſeries and infelicities of the world, fled from the offers of a kingdom, and their tumultuous election, as from an enemy, and ſending his diſciples in the ſhip before towards Bethſaida, he withdrew into the mountains to conceal himſelf till the multitude were returned to their habitations, and took that advantage of praying to his heavenly father. But when the apoſtles were far out on the deep, a violent tempeſt aroſe, which brought them into the extremity of danger, ſo that all hope of eſcaping was almoſt gone. During their inceſſant labor to ſave themſelves, in the fourth watch of the night, Jeſus came walking on the ſea; which turned their fears into affrightments, for they ſuppoſed it to have been a ſpirit, which he ſoon diſperſed by telling them who he was; which they yet deſired to have proved to them by a

ſign, for Simon Peter ſaid unto him, maſter, if it be thou, command me to come to thee on the waters. The Lord did ſo, and Peter upon confidence of the power and providence of his maſter, threw himſelf into the lake, but beginning to ſink he cried, ſaying, Lord ſave me; Jeſus took him by the hand, reproving his want of faith, and went with him in the ſhip; where when they had worſhipped him, & admitted the divinity of his power and perſon, the ſhip arrived at the port of Genazareth immediately: and all that were ſick, or poſſeſſed with unclean ſpirits were brought to him, and as many as touched the hem of his garment were made whole.

By this time they whom Jeſus had left on the other ſide of the lake, came as far as Capernaum to ſeek him, wondering that he was there before them; upon this occaſion of their diligent inquiſition, Jeſus obſerves to them, that it was not the divinity of the miracles which provoked their zeal, but the ſatisfaction they had in the loaves, and thence intimates to them the excellency of the cœleſtial bread, the divine nutriment of their ſouls; affirming himſelf to be the bread of life, that came down from heaven; that he would give to his diſciples his fleſh to eat, and his blood

to drink, and all this ſhould be for the life of the world, to nouriſh to life eternal, without which an happy eternity could not be obtained; upon this diſcourſe, divers of his diſciples (of whom it is ſaid St. Mark was one, but afterwards recalled by Simon Peter) forſook him, being ſcandaliſed by their literal and carnal underſtanding of theſe words of Jeſus, which he intended in a ſpiritual ſenſe; for the words that he ſpake, were not profitable in the ſenſe of fleſh and blood, but they are ſpirit, and they are life; himſelf being the expounder who beſt knew his own meaning.

When Jeſus obſerved this great defection of his diſciples from him, he turned to the twelve apoſtles, and aſked if they alſo would go away; Simon Peter anſwered, Lord, whither ſhall we go? Thou haſt the words of eternal life, and we are ſure thou art that Chriſt, the ſon of the living God. Though this public confeſſion was made by Peter in the name and confidence of the other apoſtles, yet Jeſus told them prophetically, that even among twelve, there was one devil, meaning Judas Iſcariot, who afterwards betrayed him; that they might perceive the ſad accidents which afterwards happened to him did not ſurprize him as being ignorant of them, or

unprovided to undergo them. After this the Scribes and Phariſees, who came from Jeruſalem and Galilee (for Jeſus would not go to Judea becauſe the Jews laid wait to kill him) quarrelled with him about ſome impertinent, unneceſſary ceremonies not inſtituted by God, but by ordinances of men; as waſhing their hands when they eat; baptizing cups and platers, and waſhing tables and beds; which rites the apoſtles did not obſerve, but attended diligently to the ſimplicity and holineſs of their maſter's doctrine; our ſaviour in return to their vain demands, ſharply reproves them for being ſo fond of theſe and many other traditions, and neglecting the divine precepts, teaching men particularly, that if they gave to the Corban, or treaſure of the church, they might refuſe to ſupply the neceſſity of their parents, and diſregard the duties of piety and charity; and thunders out woes againſt their impieties, for their pride, their hypocriſy, their impoſing burthens upon others which themſelves help not to ſupport: For their taking away the key of knowledge from the people, and obſtructing the paſſages to heaven, and for approving the wickedneſs of their fathers in perſecuting the prophets; adding concerning waſhings, that no outward impurity

did ſtain the ſoul in the ſight of God, but all pollution is from the corruption of the heart, and filthy thoughts, unchaſte deſires, and unholy purpoſes, and that love and charity are the beſt purifiers in the world.

Jeſus then departed into the coaſt of Tyre and Sidon, and entered into a houſe that he might not be known; the diligence of a mother's love and ſorrow, and neceſſity, found him out in this retirement; for a woman came and beſought him, that he would caſt the devil out of her daughter: Our ſaviour ſeemed to reject her ſuit, for the ſake of her nation, being a Syrophænician, yet this did only make her importunity more undeniable, ſhe begged but ſome crumbs which fell from the children's table, and but one inſtance of favour from him to her daughter, which he poured forth without meaſure upon the ſons and daughters of Iſrael. Jeſus was pleaſed with her zeal and diſcretion, and pitied her daughter's infelicity, and diſmiſſed her with ſaying, the devil is gone out of thy daughter.

Our ſaviour returning to the ſea of Galilee, through the midſt of Decapolis, they brought to him a man deaf and dumb, whom Jeſus cured by touching his tongue, and putting his fingers into his ears, to the admiration of the people, who thereupon

brought to him multitudes of diſeaſed perſons, and he healed them all, but the people having followed him three days without eating any thing, Jeſus in pity to their need, reſolved to feaſt them once more at the charge of a miracle; therefore taking ſeven loaves, and a few ſmall fiſhes, he bleſſed them, and ſatisfied four thouſand men, beſides women and children, and there remained ſeven baſkets full of broken bread and fiſh.

From thence Jeſus departed by ſhip to the coaſt of Dalmanutha, whither the Phariſees came, aſking him a ſign, who rejecting their captious demands, knowing their diſaffection reproved them, that they diſcerned fair or foul weather in the ſky, but not the ſigns of the ſon of man. However, ſince they neglected ſo great demonſtrations, ſuch gracious diſcourſes, holy laws and prophecies, they muſt expect no other ſign, but the ſign of the prophet Jonas, meaning the reſurrection of the body, after three days burial; and paſſing over the lake, as his diſciples were ſolicitous, becauſe they had forgot to take bread, he cautioned them to beware of the leaven of the Phariſees and Sadducees, and the leaven of Herod, meaning the hypocriſy and vanities of the one, and the hereſy of

the other, for Herod's leaven was the pretence that he was the Meſſias, which the ſect of the Herodians did earneſtly and ſpitefully promote. Coming to Bethſaida, he cured a blind man with his ſpittle; departing thence to the coaſts of Ceſarea Philippi, out of Herod's juriſdiction, as belonging to his brother Philip, after he had prayed with his diſciples, he aſked them, what opinion the world had of him, and whom they reported him to be. They anſwered, ſome ſay thou art John the Baptiſt, ſome that thou art Elias or Jeremias, or one of the prophets. The Phariſees of Galilee were of opinion, that the ſouls of dead men or departed prophets, paſſed into another body. But Jeſus aſking the apoſtles their opinion, Peter in the name of all the reſt, made an open and confident confeſſion, thou art Chriſt the ſon of the living God. This confeſſion Jeſus confirmed to be revealed by God; and after the bleſſing of Peter's perſon, upon alluſion to Peter's name, Jeſus ſaid, that upon this rock (the article of Peter's confeſſion) he ſhould build his church, which the gates of hell, perſecution, death, nor the grave ſhould never prevail againſt it, adding withal a promiſe to Peter, in behalf of all the reſt, as he made a confeſſion for them all,

that he would give unto him the keys of the kingdom of heaven, ſo that whatſoever he ſhould bind on earth, ſhould be bound in heaven, and whatſoever he ſhould looſe on earth, ſhould be looſed in heaven, a power which he never communicated before to any.

And now from hence forward, we often find our Lord uttering ſad predictions of the barbarous uſage he ſhould ſhortly meet with: That he ſhould be rejected of the elders and chief prieſts and Scribes, and ſuffer many things at Jeruſalem, and be killed and be raiſed up the third day, but Peter hearing that ſad melancholy diſcourſe, contrary to his hopes of ſome temporal advantage, he having learned the doctrine of Chriſt's coming, but not of his croſs, in miſtaken civility took Jeſus aſide, and began to rebuke him, ſaying, be it far from thee Lord, this ſhall not be unto thee: But our Lord, full of zeal againſt ſo ſoft and humane an adoration, that ſavored nothing of God, chid Peter ſeverely, ſaying, get thee behind me ſatan, thou art an offence to me. And calling his diſciples to him, aſſured them, that not only himſelf, but they alſo muſt ſuffer, and that whoſoever will be the diſciples of Jeſus, muſt take up his croſs, deny himſelf

and his own fonder appetites, and trace his maſter's footſteps, marked out with blood that he ſhed for our redemption and reſtitution, and that there can be no eſcaping from the participation of Chriſt's ſufferings, ſince he that will ſave his life, ſhall loſe it, and he that will loſe it, will ſave it to eternity; and as thoſe are fools that will loſe their ſouls to gain the world, ſo they are certainly wiſeſt that will give their lives for him, becauſe when the ſon of man ſhall come in his glory, and his father's, and of the angels, he ſhall reward every man according to his works; this diſcourſe Jeſus concluded with a prophecy, that ſome ſtanding in that preſence, ſhould not die 'till they ſaw the ſon of man coming in his glory.

Of the great glories in time to be revealed, Jeſus after eight days gave a bright and excellent probation, for taking with him Peter, and James, and John, he went up into the mount Tabor to pray; and while he prayed, he was transfigured before them, and his face did ſhine like the ſun, and his garments were white and glittering; and there appeared talking with him, Moſes and Elias, glorioufly ſpeaking of his deceaſe, which he ſhould accompliſh at Jeruſalem; which glory theſe apoſtles,

when they were awaked from ſleep, into which they had fallen, did behold. After the departure of theſe heavenly viſitants, the apoſtles being full of fear and wonder, Peter talked he knew not what, ſaying, maſter, it is good to be here; let us build three tabernacles. And it is recorded, that in after-ages ſome devout perſons in memory of this myſtery, did erect three churches in the ſame place. Suddenly after a cloud ſurrounded Jeſus and his diſciples, and a voice came from the excellent glory, ſaying, this is my beloved ſon in whom I am well pleaſed, hear ye him; the cloud which made them ſore afraid, quickly diſappeared, and freed them from their preſent conſternation, and they deſcended with Jeſus from the mountain, who commanded them to keep ſilence, which they obſerved 'till his reſurrection.

The next day came to Jeſus a man in behalf of his ſon, who was lunatick, and ſore troubled with the devil, who ſought often to deſtroy him with fire and water, beſeeching our ſaviour to deliver him, his diſciples having tried in vain, but could not perform any thing for want of faith, which if it be true, is of power to remove mountains, to pluck up trees by the roots, and plant them in the ſea; our ſaviour

then rebuked the devil, who that hour departed from him. Coming to Capernaum, the exactors of taxes came to Simon Peter, asking him if his master paid tribute, which was a sicle or drachm, the fourth part of an ounce of silver, about fifteen pence in value, which was the tribute that the Lord imposed upon all the sons of Israel, from twenty years old and above, to pay for redemption and propitiation, and for the use of the tabernacle. When Peter came into the house, Jesus knowing his message, prevented him, asking him, of whom do the kings of the earth take tribute? of their own children, or of strangers? Peter answered, for strangers; then said Jesus, the children are free.—— Meaning, that since the Gentile or Heathen kings do not exact tribute of their sons, neither will God of his sons or children; and therefore this pension to be paid for the use of the tabernacle, for the service of God, and for the redemption of their souls, was not to be paid by him who was the son of God, but by strangers; yet to avoid offence, he sent Peter a fishing, and provided a fish with two drachms of silver, which he commanded Peter to pay for them two.

When the disciples were together in the

houſe with Jeſus, he aſked them, what they had diſcourſed on by the way; for they had been engaged in an ambitious and miſtaken quarrel, which of them ſhould be greateſt in their maſter's kingdom; they ſtill dreaming that it ſhould be an external and earthly dominion, but their maſter to check their forwardneſs, told them, that he that would be greateſt among them ſhould be their miniſter; and taketh a little child, and ſetting him in the midſt, as a pattern of humility and ſimplicity, ſuch innocent lowlineſs of ſpirit being abſolutely neceſſary if we will enter into the courts of heaven, from whence Jeſus diſcourſes of the care God takes of little children, whether naturally or ſpiritually ſuch, the danger of giving them offence, the law and power of their angel guardians, and of the neceſſity in the event, that ſcandals and offences ſhould ariſe, and the great woe and miſery of thoſe perſons, who were the occaſion of them.

But if in the traverſes of life, injuries ſhould be done us, he bids us firſt reprove the perſon that has done us wrong privately, and upon his repentance to forgive him forever; with a mercy as unwearied and multiplied as his penitence. For the ſervant to whom the Lord that forgave ten

thouſand talents, becauſe he refuſed to forgive his fellow-ſervant an hundred pence, was delivered to the tormentors till he ſhould pay that debt which his Lord once forgave.

John now came and gave him information of a ſtranger that caſt out devils in the name of Jeſus, but becauſe he was not of the family, he had forbidden him: our ſaviour replies, he ſhould in no wiſe have forbidden him, for there is no man which ſhall do a miracle in my name, that can lightly ſpeak evil of me, for he that is not againſt us, is for us. Then Jeſus proceeded in his excellent ſermon, adding holy precepts, concerning offences which a man might do to himſelf in which caſe he is to be ſevere, though moſt gentle to others; for in his own caſe he muſt ſhew no mercy, it being better to cut off the offending hand or foot, or part with an eye rather than with the ſupport of a troubleſome foot, or a wandering eye, fall into a ſad eternity, where the worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched, and ſo ended his excellent diſcourſes at this time.

About this time was the Jews' feaſt of tabernacles, whither Jeſus went up as it were in ſecret, and paſſing through Samaria, he found the inhabitants of a little

village ſo inhoſpitable as to refuſe to give him entertainment, which ſo provoked the intemperate zeal of James and John, that they fain would have called fire from heaven, to conſume them as Elias did. But our Lord rebuked their anger, teaching them to diſtinguiſh the ſpirit of chriſtianity from the decretary zeal of Elias, for ſince the Son of man came to ſeek and to ſave what was loſt, it was indiſcretion and raſhneſs, upon the lighteſt diſpleaſure, to deſtroy a man, whoſe redemption coſt the effuſion of the deareſt blood from the heart of Jeſus; on the contrary our bleſſed Saviour does a miracle upon the ten leprous perſons which came to him, crying out with ſad exclamations for help; but Jeſus ſent them to the prieſt to offer for their cleanſing, and but one only returned to give thanks, and he a ſtranger, who with a loud voice glorified God, and with humble adoration, worſhipped and gave thanks to Jeſus.

Our Lord having finiſhed his journey, was now come to Jeruſalem; there were various opinions concerning him, ſome ſaying he was a good man, others, that he deceived the people, and the Phariſees ſought for him to do him miſchief; but when they deſpairing finding him in the

midſt of the feaſt and the people, he preached openly in the midſt of the temple; and though they were convinced by the variety and divinity of his miracles and diſcourſes; yet to make it appear how far prejudice may prevail againſt conviction and demonſtration, we find a proverb, a circumſtance outweighed multitudes of miracles and arguments, and Chriſt being of Galilee, when they knew whence he was, becauſe of the proverb, That out of Galilee comes no prophet. Therefore the rulers did not believe him, but queſtioned his power and his divinity, yet very many believed on him, and no man durſt lay his hands upon him to take him, for as yet his time was not come; therefore when the Phariſees ſent officers to ſeize him, they alſo became his diſciples, being themſelves ſurpriſed with the excellency of his doctrine.

After this, Jeſus went to the mount of Olives, on the feaſt of Jeruſalem, and next day returned again into the temple, where the Scribes and Phariſees brought him a woman taken in the act of adultery; tempting him to give ſentence, that they might accuſe him of ſeverity, or intermeddling if he condemned her, and of remiſneſs and popularity if he did acquit

her. But our Saviour found out an expedient for their difficulty, and changed the ſcene, by bidding him that was innocent among them to throw the firſt ſtone at the adultreſs, and then ſtooping down, to them a fair occaſion to withdraw, he wrote upon the ground, with his finger, Jeſus was left alone, and the woman in the midſt, whom Jeſus diſmiſſed, charging her to ſin no more. A while after, Jeſus begins again to diſcourſe to them of his miſſion from the Father; of his crucifixion and exaltation from the earth; of the reward of believers; of the excellency of truth; of ſpiritual liberty and relations; who are the ſons of Abraham, and who the children of the devil; of his own eternal generation; and of the deſire of Abraham to ſee this day. And confuting their malicious and vain calumnies, till they to confute him, took up ſtones to caſt at him, but he went out of the temple, going through the midſt of them, and ſo paſſed by.

In his paſſage he met with a man born blind, and declared that his blindneſs was not a puniſhment for his own or his parents ſin, which was the opinion of the Phariſees, but ſent as an occaſion to make public the glory of God; he to manifeſt

himſelf to be the light of the world in all ſenſes, proved it by a miracle; for anointing his eyes with clay and ſpittle, he bid him go waſh in Siloam, which was a pool of clear water, ſent by God (ſaith Epiphanius) at the prayer of Haiah the prophet, a little before his death, to ſatisfy the neceſſities of the people, oppreſſed with thirſt, and a cloſe ſiege, ſtanding at the foot of Mount Sion, and gave its water at certain times and periods, always to the Jews, but not to their enemies; and by the overflowing thereof, a pool was made; the blind man went and waſhed and returned ſeeing, and was inceſſantly vexed with the Phariſees, to tell them the manner and circumſtances of the cure; and when the man had averred the truth, and named his phyſician, giving him a pious and charitable teſtimony, the Phariſees, becauſe they could not force him to diſavow his good opinion of Jeſus, caſt him out, or excommunicated him: But Jeſus meeting him, received him into the church, and told him, that he was Chriſt, and the man became again enlightned, and he believed and worſhipped. But the Phariſees blaſphemed, and in the midſt of light ſhut their eyes, and doated upon darkneſs, and therefore their ſin did remain.

Jeſus then continued his ſermon among the Phariſees, and diſcourſed of the properties of a good ſhepherd, proving them to be thieves and robbers, becauſe they refuſed to enter in by Jeſus, who is the door of the ſheep; and unlike all other ſhepherds, would lay down his life for his ſheep. The Jews to requite him for his divine precepts, uſed their old argument, taking up ſtones again, to throw at him, but he eſcaped out of their hands, and went away beyond Jordan, where John at firſt baptized; which made the people remember, that John did no miracle, but this man whom John gave teſtimony of his holineſs, did many miracles, and many believed on him there.

After this Jeſus knowing that the harveſt was great, and the labourers but very few, ſent out ſeventy-two of his diſciples with the like commiſſion as formerly to the twelve apoſtles, that they might go before to the places whither himſelf meant to come who upon their return from their journey rejoiced greatly in ſpirit, giving glory to God, that he had revealed his goſpel to babes, and hid them from the wiſe and learned. At this time a doctor of the law came to Jeſus, ſaying, maſter, what ſhall I do to inherit eternal life? our ſa-

viour referred him to the ſcriptures, and declared the way to heaven to be this only, to love the Lord with all our powers and faculties: But when the lawyer was captious, aſking, who was his neighbour, Chriſt tells him a parable of a traveller fallen into the hands of thieves, and neglected by a prieſt and a Levite, but relieved by a Samaritan, ſince no diſtance of country or religion deſtroys the relation of neighbourhood; but every perſon with whom they converſe in peace and charity, is that neighbour whom we are to love as ourſelves.

Jeſus departing from Jeruſalem, came to a village called Bethany, where Martha making great and buſy preparation for his entertainment, to expreſs her joy and affection to his perſon, deſired him to diſmiſs Mary from his feet, who ſat there feaſting herſelf with his excellent diſcourſes, to aſſiſt her; but tho' Jeſus did not diſcommend Martha's civility, yet he prefered Mary's choice, religion, and ſanctity. Our ſaviour now teaches the diſciples that form of prayer, called the Lord's prayer, the ſecond time, and that they ſhould be indefatigable and importunate in prayer, like the widow who forced an unjuſt judge to do her juſtice by her earneſtneſs and continual ſolliciting him. Ma-

ny other things he added in this ſermon, and ſome being preſent that told him of the Galileans, whoſe blood Pilate mingled with their ſacifices; Jeſus replied, that theſe ſad calamities were no arguments that theſe Galileans were greater ſinners than others, tho' this judgment fell upon them. Theſe Galileans were a ſort of people that taught it to be unlawful to pay tribute to ſtrangers, or to pray for the Roman Emperors, and becauſe the Jews did both, they refuſed to communicate with them in their ſacred rites and ceremonies, but would ſacrifice a part, at which ſolemnity, when Pilate the Roman deputy apprehended many of them, he cauſed them all to be ſlain, and to die upon the ſame alters.

And now a certain ruler of the ſynagogue, repining at Jeſus for having cured a woman that was crooked, looſing her from her infirmity, wherewith ſhe had been afflicted eighteen years; our ſaviour made the man aſhamed by aſking him, whether he himſelf would not looſe an ox from the ſtall, and lead him to watering on the ſabbath-day. And by the ſame arguments ſilenced the Scribes and Phariſees, who were angry with him, for curing a perſon of the dropſy on that day. For

Jeſus to take off the yoke of the ceremonial law, by aboliſhing the Moſaick rites, choſe to do many of his miracles on the ſabbath, and free chriſtianity from that burden, that he might abrogate the one, and inſtitute the Lord's Day at the ſame time; not much unlike the Sabbatical River which the Rabbies mention—That was dry ſix days, but guſhed out in a full ſtream on the Sabbath. Jeſus then went up and down the cities of Galilee, inforcing the doctrines he had taught them, and adding new precepts, advertiſing them of the multitudes of thoſe that periſh, and how few ſhall be ſaved, and that they ſhould ſtrive to enter into the ſtrait gait; the way to deſtruction being fair and plauſible, but the way to heaven very difficult, and few there be that find it. He diſcourſes of the many excuſes that perſons uſed who were invited to the feaſt of the kingdom, and the refreſhments of the goſpel, and tacitly inſinuates the rejection of the Jews, who were firſt invited, and the calls of the Gentiles, from the highways and hedges. He reprehends Herod for his ſubtility and deſign to kill him; prophecies he ſhould die at Jeruſalem, and intimates the ſad deſolations that ſhould happen, for neglecting this their day of viſitation,

and for killing the prophets and meſſengers ſent from God.

The Jews' feaſt of dedication being at hand, Jeſus went up to Jeruſalem, and preached in Solomon's porch; and the end of the ſermon was, That the Jews had like to have ſtoned him again. But retiring from thence he went beyond Jordan and by a moſt elegant and perſuaſive parable, declared to the people the mercy of God in accepting penitents, by the example of the Father, who received the prodigal ſon upon his return from his follies and alleviations; he diſcourſes of the Meſſias coming into the world, to recover living perſons from their ſin and danger in the parables of the loſt ſheep and goat, and under the repreſentment of the unjuſt but prudent ſteward, he teaches us to employ our preſent opportunities and eſtates, by laying them out in acts of mercy and religion, that when our ſouls ſhall be diſmiſſed from the ſtewardſhip and cuſtody of our body, we may be entertained in everlaſting habitations. He then utters a parable of Dives, a voluptuous and uncharitable man, and Lazarus, a pious, afflicted, ſick beggar, the firſt died and went to hell, the ſecond into Abraham's boſom; God ſo ordering the diſ-

penſation of good things, that we cannot eaſily enjoy two heavens; nor ſhall the miſeries of this life, if we be truly religious, be otherwiſe than a beautiful eternity; and for Dives' requeſt, that his brethren might have warning of his woful condition; our ſaviour ſhews, that the ordinary ways of ſalvation are the expreſs revelations of ſcripture, and the miniſtries of God's appointment; and whoſoever neglects theſe, ſhall not be ſupplied by extraordinary means, or if he were, they would be totally ineffectual. He then laid his hands upon ſome young children, and gave them his bleſſing, charging his apoſtles to admit of infants to him, becauſe to them in perſon, and to ſuch as they in ſignification, the kingdom of heaven does appertain. He inſtructs a young man in the way to happineſs, by keeping God's commands, and heroical acts of charity, which diſcourſe falling upon a perſon not enough reſigned nor weaned from worldly enjoyments, for he was very rich; our Lord then diſcourſes how hard it is for a rich man to be ſaved, but expounds himſelf to mean, they that truſt in riches; however, though it is a matter of great difficulty, and almoſt impoſſible, not to be overcome with the

love of the world, yet nothing is impoſſible to God. But when the apoſtles heard their maſter bid the young man ſell all, and give to the poor, and follow him, and for his reward promiſed him an heavenly treaſure; Peter in the name of the reſt, began to think that this was their caſe, and the promiſe alſo might concern them, and aſked the queſtion, "What ſhall we have who have forſaken all, and followed thee?" Jeſus anſwered, "They ſhould ſit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Iſrael;" adding, "That every diſciple who ſhould forſake either houſe or wife, or children, or any other thing for his ſake, and the goſpel, ſhould receive an hundred fold in this life by way of comfort and equivalency, and in the world to come, thouſands of glories and poſſeſſions to all eternity;" for they that are laſt, ſhall be firſt, and the firſt ſhall be laſt, and the deſpiſed people of this world ſhall reign like kings, and poverty ſhall ſwell into eternal ſatisfaction, for as our Saviour taught his diſciples in the parable of the labourers in the vineyard, the ſame reward ſhall be given to all, though the times of their working were different, and crowns of glory ſhall be beſtowed upon all the

faithful followers of Jeſus, who ſhall reign with him to eternal ages.

While Jeſus was in Galilee, meſſengers came to him from Martha and Mary her ſiſter, that he would haſten into Judea to Bethany to relieve her brother Lazarus, who was dangerouſly ſick; but he defered going 'till Lazarus was dead, but he would raiſe him out of that ſleep of death. By that time Jeſus was arrived at Bethany, he found that Lazarus had been dead four days, and now near to putrefaction, but when Martha and Mary met him, weeping with pious tears for their dead brother, he himſelf ſuffered the paſſions of piety and humanity: Jeſus wept, diſtilling that precious liquor into the grave of Lazarus, watering the dead plant, that it might ſpring into a new life.

When our ſaviour by his words of comfort and inſtruction, had ſtrengthened the faith of the two mourning ſiſters, and commanded the ſtone to be removed from the grave; he made an addreſs of adoration to his father, confeſſing his readineſs always to hear him, and then cried out, Lazarus come forth; and he that was dead came forth of his bed of darkneſs, with his burying cloaths on him, whom when the apoſtles had unlooſed at the command of Jeſus, he

went to Bethany, and many that were present believed on him, but others wondering and malicious, went and told the Pharisees the story of the miracle, who upon their advice called the great council, who took solemn cognizance of the principal causes of prophets, of kings, and of the holy law; at which great assembly, Caiaphas the high priest prophesied, that it was expedient one should die for the people, and thenceforth they determined the death of our blessed saviour; who being acquainted with what they had decreed, retired to the city of Ephraim, in the tribe of Judah, near the desart.

Here he continued 'till the feast of Easter, & then going toward Jerusalem with his disciples he told them what the event of his journey would be, that the Jews should deliver him to the Gentiles, and that they should scourge him, and mock him, and crucify him, and the third day he should rise again. After this discourse, the mother of Zebedee's children begged of Jesus for her two sons, that one might sit on his right hand, and the other at his left in his kingdom. For no discourse of his passion could make his disciples sensible of the mysteriousness of his kingdom, which was not of this world; but if they would

partake of the favors of it, ſuch as they were, they muſt drink of his cup and be partakers of his ſufferings, and thereby put themſelves in a diſpoſition for becoming veſſels of election. Coming in his journey near Jericho, he cures a blind man ſitting by the way ſide, and eſpying Zaccheus, a man of low ſtature, the chief of the publicans, upon a tree, that he might ſee Jeſus paſſing by; Jeſus invited himſelf to his houſe, who received him with gladneſs, & repentance of his crimes, offering ſatisfaction to all whom he had wronged, and gave half the remainder of his eſtate to the poor.

Six days before Eaſter, Jeſus came to Bethany, where he was feaſted by Martha and Mary, accompanied with Lazarus, who ſat at table with him, and now many came to ſee Jeſus, and Lazarus who was raiſed from the dead, and upon that occaſion believed on Jeſus. The next day Jeſus came to the foot of the mount of Olives, and ſent his diſciples to Bethphage, commanding them to unlooſe an aſs and a colt, and bring them, telling the owner it was for their maſter's uſe; and riding to Jeruſalem, the people upon notice of his approach, took branches of palm-trees, ſtrewing them in the way, and crying out, Ho-

ſanna, to the ſon of David; which was a form of exclamation uſed to the honor of God, and in great ſolemnity, ſignifying, Lord ſave us, Lord proſper us, and the Phariſees knowing this to be an appropriate manner of addreſs to God alone, ſaid one to another, by way of wonder, hear what theſe men ſay.

When Jeſus from the mount beheld Jeruſalem, he wept over it, and foretold the miſeries and infelicities which would happen to it, of which every circumſtance came to paſs. For in the mount of Olives, where Jeſus ſhed tears over periſhing Jeruſalem, the Romans firſt pitched their tents when it came to its final deſtruction. The peoples' acclamations followed till the Phariſees were ready to burſt with envy; and there he cured certain perſons that were blind and lame. Jeſus then came to Bethany, and turning into the houſe of Simon the leper, Mary Magdalen having been reproved by Judas, for ſpending ointment upon Jeſus feet, of great value; to declare her love once more, ſhe poured the ſame rich ointment on his ſacred head; all the diſciples murmuring at this prodigious expenſe, Jeſus, to expreſs his thankfulneſs, and her miraculous affection, added this prophecy, that where ever the

goſpel ſhould be preached, a record of this act ſhould be kept as a perpetual monument of her piety.

Two days before the paſſover, the Scribes and Phariſees called a council, to contrive crafty ways for deſtroying of Jeſus, they not daring to do it by open violence. Of which meeting Judas Iſcariot having notice, ran from Bethany, and offered himſelf to betray his maſter to them, if they would give him a conſiderable reward; they agreed for thirty pieces of ſilver, which according to the Jewiſh account, it is thought to be thirty pound weight of ſilver, a goodly price for the ſaviour of the world to be prized at by his undiſcerning and unworthy countryman. The next day, which was the firſt day of the unleavened bread, on which it was neceſſary they ſhould kill the paſſover, Jeſus ſent Peter and John to the city to a certain man whom they ſhould find carrying a pitcher of water to his houſe; him they ſhould follow, and there prepare the paſſover; they went and found the man in the ſame circumſtances, and prepared for Jeſus and his family, who at the evening came to celebrate the paſſover: It was the houſe of John, ſirnamed Mark, which had always been opened to this bleſſed family, where our ſaviour was pleaſed to finiſh his laſt ſupper.

When the evening was come, Jeſus ſtood with his diſciples & eat the paſchal lamb, after which he girt himſelf with a towel, & taking a baſon, waſhed the feet of his diſciples, inſtructing them in the doctrine of humility, by his own example. But Peter was unwilling to be waſhed by his Lord, until he was told he muſt renounce his part in him unleſs he were waſhed, who therefore cried out, not my feet only, but my hands and my head. Jeſus ſaid, the waſhing of the feet was ſufficient for the purification of the whole man, relating to the cuſtom of thoſe countries who uſed to go to ſupper immediately from the baths, and were ſufficiently clean, ſave only on their feet, by reaſon of the duſt contracted in their paſſage from the baths to the dining-room; and by it Jeſus meant that the body of ſin was waſhed away in the baths of baptiſm.

After the eating of the paſchal lamb, it was the cuſtom of the Jews to ſit down to a ſecond ſupper, in which they eat herbs and unleavened bread, the maſter of the family firſt dipping his morſel, and then the reſt of the houſehold, after which the father brake bread into pieces, and diſtributed a part to every one of the gueſts, and firſt drinking himſelf, gave to the reſt the cup filled with wine, according to the age and

dignity of the perſon, adding to each diſtribution a form of benediction proper to the myſtery, which was commemorative of their deliverance out of Egypt. This ſupper Jeſus being to celebrate, turned the ceremony into a myſtery, and gave his body and blood ſacramentally; hereby inſtituting the bleſſed ſacrament, which from the time of its inſtitution, is called, the Lord's ſupper, which rite Jeſus commanded the apoſtles to commemorate until his ſecond coming.

But Jeſus being troubled in ſpirit, told his diſciples, that one of them ſhould betray him, to confirm them in their belief of his wiſdom and ſpirit of prophecy; the diſciples were diſturbed, and looking on one another, doubting of whom he ſpake, beckoned to the beloved diſciple leaning on Jeſus's breaſt, that he might aſk; for they who knew their own innocency, were deſirous to ſatisfy their curioſity, to be rid of their fear. Jeſus being aſked, gave them a ſign, and a ſop to Judas, commanding him to do what he liſt ſpeedily. Jeſus being extremely ſtreightened till he had drank the bitter cup prepared for him. After Judas received the ſop, the devil entered into him, and he went forth immediately, it being now night.

After his departure, Jeſus began his farewell ſermon, diſcourſing of the glorification of God in his ſon, and of thoſe glories his father had prepared for him; his ſudden departure to prepare a place for them: commanding them to love one another, foretelling Peter, who made confident proteſts, that he would die with his maſter, yet before the cock crew twice he ſhould deny him thrice; arming them againſt perſecution, & giving them his bleſſing, and praying for them, and then having ſung an hymn, which was part of the great hallelujah, beginning at the cxiv Pſalm, When Iſrael came out of Egypt, &c. ending at the cxviiith, incluſive, went forth with his diſciples over the brook Cedron, to the mount of Olives, to a village called Gethſemane, where there was a garden, into which he entered to pray, together with his diſciples. But taking Peter, James and John with him, about a ſtone's caſt from the reſt, he began to be exceeding ſorrowful and ſad even unto death; ſaying, Tarry ye here, and watch with me, and he was withdrawn from them, and kneeled down and fell on his face to the ground, ſaying, O my father! if it be poſſible, let this cup paſs from me, nevertheleſs not my will, but thy will be

done; this he repeated thrice in the ſame words; but knowing the drinking of this cup, was the great end of his coming into the world, he diveſted himſelf of the affections of fleſh and blood, and becauſe his father commanded, was deſirous to ſuffer all our pains.

Mean while Judas the traitor came with a multitude of armed men, with ſwords and ſtaves from the prieſts and elders to apprehend him, taking the opportunity of the night, becauſe they durſt not ſeize him by day, for fear of the people, and Judas ſignified the perſon of his maſter to the ſoldiers by a kiſs, an addreſs of ſeeming civility; but when they came toward him, Jeſus ſaid, Whom ſeek ye? They ſaid, Jeſus of Nazareth. He ſaid, I am he; yet there was a divinity upon him, that the ſoldiers coming at firſt with a rude attempt, were twice repelled by the glory of his perſon, till they falling at his feet, were at laſt admitted to the ſeizure of his perſon; but Peter, a ſtout Galilean, attempted a bold reſcue, cut off the ear of one of the high prieſt's ſervants; but Jeſus rebuked his paſſion, and commanded him to put up his ſword, ſaying, all that ſtrike with the ſword, ſhall periſh with the ſword, and touched Malchus' ear and cured him.

When Jeſus had yielded himſelf to their power, his diſciples fled, and John the evangeliſt, who for grief, had forgot to lay aſide his upper garment, which they uſed on feſtivals to put on, began to make his eſcape, but being ſeized by the linen upon his bare body, was forced to leave that behind him, that himſelf might avoid his maſters' danger. But Peter followed afar off, and the greatneſs of John's love made him return to the high prieſt's hall, after his ſurpriſe and fright was over. Jeſus was firſt led to Annas, who was the prince of the Sanhedrim, and had cognizance of prophets and public doctrines, who aſking Jeſus of his diſciples, and of his doctrines, anſwered, that he ſpoke only to the world, and therefore referred him to the teſtimony of all the people; for which true anſwer, a ſervant ſtanding by ſtruck him on the face, and Jeſus meekly anſwered him, what evil had he done? But Annas without the ſeventy Judges could do nothing, and therefore ſent him to Caiaphas, who was High Prieſt that year.

Peter coming thither, denied three times that he was a Galilean, and of Jeſus's family, till our Saviour looking back, reminded him of his prediction, and the

foulneſs of the crime, and the cock crew; Peter went out and wept bitterly, that he might cleanſe his ſoul from the foul ſtains he had contracted by his ſhameful perjury, and denying his Lord; and it is reported, that ever after, when he heard a cock crow, he wept at the remembrance of his own unworthineſs.

In the morning the council aſſembled and ſought falſe witneſs againſt Jeſus, but found none to the purpoſe: They railed boldly, but could find nothing; they accuſed vehemently, but the greateſt article that their malice could pretend to, was, That he would deſtroy the temple, and build it up again in three days; but the witneſſes by diſagreeing, made void each others teſtimony, and therefore Jeſus anſwered neither to this, nor any other of their allegations, 'till at length Caiaphas adjures him by the living God, to ſay whether he was Chriſt or no. Jeſus knew his deſign was to take away his life by this inquiry and not out of piety or curioſity, yet becauſe his hour was now come, openly affirmed he was Chriſt the Son of God, which when Caiaphas heard, he cried out blaſphemy, rent his garments, and called preſently for ſentence to be pronounced againſt him, and as it was agreed,

they all condemned him as guilty of death, and as far as they had power inflicted it; for they beat him with their fiſts, ſmote him with the palms of their hands, ſpit upon him, and abuſed him. When Judas heard they had paſſed the final ſentence upon him, he repented him of his wickedneſs, and he bro't back the reward of his treaſon, and threw it among them, ſaying, I have betrayed innocent blood, and the prieſts upon conſultation, bought with the money a field to bury ſtrangers in; and Judas went and hanged himſelf; it is reported by the ancients, that Judas fell from the fig-tree on which he was hanged, before he was quite dead, and at length ſo ſwelled, that he burſt, and his bowels guſhed out. The High Prieſt having aſſigned over Jeſus to the ſecular power, carried him to Pilate to be put to death by his ſentence, or military authority. Pilate, willing to decline the buſineſs, bid them judge him according to their own law; they replied, it was not lawful for them to put any man to death, meaning during the ſeven days of unleavened bread, which then happened, as appears in the inſtance of Herod, who detained Peter in priſon, intending after Eaſter to bring him out to the people. Others think, that all the right of inflict-

ing capital puniſhments was taken from the Jews by the Romans, and Joſephus writes, that when Ananias the high prieſt had, by a council of that nation, condemned St. James, the brother of our Lord, and put him to death without the conſent of the Roman preſident, he was deprived of his prieſthood: but their malice being reſtleſs 'till the ſentence they had paſt was put in execution againſt our ſaviour, and they knowing that pilate was a zea'ous promoter of the Roman greatneſs, and an hater of the ſect of the Galileans, the high prieſt accuſed Jeſus that he was of that ſect —and that he denied paying tribute to Cæſar, and called himſelf king. Pilate having queſtioned him about it, he anſwered that his kingdom was not of this world— Pilate thinking he had nothing to do with the other kingdom, gave teſtimony, that he found nothing worthy of death in Jeſus. But hearing that he was a Galilean, and of Herod's Juriſdiction, he ſent him to Herod, who was at Jeruſalem at the feaſt.— Herod was glad, becauſe he had heard much of him, and deſired to ſee him, hoping to ſee ſome miracle done by him, of whom he had heard ſo many; but the event was, that Jeſus did no miracle, and Herod's ſoldiers ſet him at naught, and

mocked him; and that day Herod was reconciled to Pilate. And Jeſus was ſent back cloathed in a white and ſplended garment, which tho' poſſibly they intended in deriſion, yet was a token of innocence, condemned perſons being uſually arrayed in black.

But Pilate offered that according to the cuſtom of the nation, Jeſus ſhould be releaſed for the honor of the preſent feſtival; yet the ſpirit of malice was more prevalent, and the multitude required that Barabbas, a murderer, a thief, and a ſeditious perſon, ſhould be exchanged for him: Pilate being willing to acquit Jeſus from puniſhment, and himſelf of guilt, offered to ſcourge him, and let him go, hoping that a leſſer draught of blood might ſtop their rage; but theſe miſcreants cried out, crucify him, and told him plainly, that if he let this man go, he was no friend to Cæſar. Pilate then called for water, and waſhed his hands, to ſhew his own unwillingneſs, and fix this guilt on them, who took it upon them as greedily; as they ſucked his blood, they cried out, his blood be upon us and our children. As Pilate was going to give ſentence, his wife being troubled in her dream, ſent with the earneſtneſs and paſſion of a woman, that he

ſhould have nothing to do with that juſt perſon. But he was engaged. Cæſar and Jeſus, God and the king did ſeem to have different intereſts, and tho' he was ſatisfied it was only calumny and malice, yet againſt the divine laws and the Roman alſo, he condemned an innocent perſon, and adjudged him to a death, which was only due to murderers and public thieves; upon pretence of blaſphemy, of which he ſtood accuſed, but not convicted, and for which by the Jews law, he ſhould have been ſtoned to death.

And now was the holy lamb to bleed; firſt therefore, Palate's ſoldiers array him in royal robes, put a reed in his hand for a ſcepter, plaited a crown of thorns on his head; they bow the knee, and mock him, and inſtead of tribute, pay him with blows and ſpitting upon his holy head, and after the moſt horrid abuſes, they bind him to a pillar and ſcourge him with whips, a puniſhment inflicted only on ſlaves; after which, Barabbas being ſet free, Pilate delivered Jeſus to be crucified; the ſoldiers therefore having made a croſs ſad and heavy, laid it upon Jeſus's ſhoulders, who like Iſaac, bore the wood with which himſelf was to be ſacrificed, and drove him out to crucifiction, who was ſcarce able to ſtand un-

der that load, and when he fainted, they compelled Simon a Cyrenian, to help him. A great and mixt multitude followed Jesus to Golgotha, the charnel-house of the city, and the place of execution: but the women wept with bitter exclamations, and their sadness was encreased by the sad predictions Jesus then uttered of their future calamities, and that the time should come that men should say, blessed are the barren that never bare, and the paps that never gave suck.

When Jesus was come to Golgotha, a place in the mount of Calvary, where according to tradition Adam was buried, and where Abraham made an altar for the sacrifice of his son, the soldiers having stripped him, nailed him to the cross with 4 nails, between two thieves in the midst of all his torments, Jesus made only one prayer and sorrow, to represent his sad condition, as if God had forsaken him, but not a syllable of anger against his enemies; instead of that, he sent up a holy, charitable, effective prayer for their forgiveness, by which it is recorded, he obtained of God, that within fifty-five days, eight thousand of his enemies were converted; three long hours the holy Jesus hung cloathed with pain, agony, and dishonor; his holy virgin moth-

er ſtood by his croſs, on whom old Simeon's propheſy was fulfilled. But her hope and expectation of the reſurrection drew a veil before her ſorrow, and her love ſwallowed up her grief; eſpecially conſidering, that tho' her ſon had no temporal eſtate to beſtow, yet with his dying breath he made proviſion for her, by conſigning her over to the care of John the beloved diſciple, who from that day forward took her home to his own houſe.

CHRIST'S CRUCIFICTION.

PILATE procured the following inſcription to be put over the head of Jeſus, written in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin—*Jeſus of Nazareth, King of the Jews*, which the Phariſees would have altered, and that he ſaid, *He was King of the Jews*, but Pilate out of ſpitefulneſs, or to diſpite their nation, or in honor of Jeſus, whom he knew to be a juſt perſon, as being over-ruled by divine providence, refuſed to alter it. While Jeſus was praying and dying for his enemies, the rulers of the Jews mocked him, upbraiding him with the good works he did, and the inſtances of his power, ſaying, *He ſaved others; himſelf he cannot ſave.* Others ſaid, *Let him come down from the*

Croſs, if he be the King of the Jews, and we will believe in him. And of the two malefactors that were crucified with him, one reviled him, ſaying, *If thou be Chriſt, ſave thyſelf and us.* But the other thief whom the preſent pains and circumſtances of Jeſus's paſſion had ſoftened and made believing, reproved his fellow for not fearing God, confeſſing that they ſuffered deſervedly, but Jeſus lawleſly, and then prayed to Jeſus, *Lord remember me, when thou comeſt into thy kingdom:* Which miraculous converſion Jeſus entertained with a ſpeedy promiſe of a very great felicity, promiſing that on the very day he ſhould be with him in paradiſe.

While theſe things were doing, the whole frame of nature ſeemed to be diſſolved and out of order, becauſe the Lord and Creator ſuffered, for the ſun was ſo darkened, that the ſtars appeared, and the eclipſe was ſo prodigious, the moon not being then in conjunction, but full, as was noted by Phlegon the freed man of the Roman Emperor Adrian, by Lucian, and Dionyſius while he was yet a heathen, all excellent ſcholars, great hiſtorians and philoſophers, who alſo noted the day of the week, and hour of the day, agreeing in all circumſtances, for the ſun was hid from beholding ſuch a prodigy

of wickedneſs and ſadneſs, and provided a veil for the nakedneſs of Jeſus, that the women might be preſent, and himſelf die with modeſty.

The eclipſe and the paſſion began at the ſixth hour, and continued to the ninth, about which time, Jeſus being tormented with the unſufferable load of his father's wrath, due for our ſins, and wearied with pains and heavineſs, cryed out, *My God, My God, why haſt thou forſaken me!* And as 'tis tho't repeated the whole 22d Pſalm, which is an admirable narrative of the paſſion, full of prayers and complaints at firſt, and a deſcription of his pains, and thankſgiving, joy and prophecy at the laſt, but theſe firſt words it is recorded he ſpake in a language of itſelf, or elſe by reaſon of diſtance, was not underſtood, for they thought he called for Elias to take him from the croſs.

Then Jeſus being in an agony, ſaid, I thirſt, and one ran and filled a ſponge with vinegar, wrapping it with hyſop, and put it on a reed, that he might drink. The vinegar and ſponge were in executions of condemned perſons, to ſtop the two violent iſſues of blood, and prolong the death, but were offered to him in ſcorn mingled with gall, to make the mixture more horrid and nauſeous, but Jeſus taſted it only,

and refuſed the draught. And now knowing that the prophecies were fulfilled, and his torments ſatisfactory, he ſaid, it is finiſhed, and crying with a loud voice, *Father into thy hands I commend my ſpirit*, he bowed his head, and yielded up his ſpirit into the hands of God, and died haſtening to his fathers' glories, to ſhine in the other world.

Then the veil of the temple, which ſeparated the Moſaic ceremonies from the eyes of the people, rent in the midſt, from the top to the bottom, and the angels preſidents of the temple, called to each other to depart from their ſeats, and ſo great an earthquake happened, that the rocks did rend, the mountains trembled, the graves opened, and the bodies of dead perſons aroſe, walking from their burying places to the holy city, and appeared unto many, and ſo great apprehenſions and amazement happened to all them that ſtood by, that they departed ſmiting their breaſts with ſorrow and fear, and the centurion that attended at the execution, ſaid, certainly this was the ſon of God.

THE HYMN.

WHEN our forlorn and helpleſs ſtate,
None could relieve beſide;
Then at th' appointed time our Lord,
For the ungodly dy'd.

Who e'er redeem'd a juſt man's life,
By laying down his own?
Perhaps there may ſuch gen'rous love,
To a good man be ſhown.

But the tranſcendent love of God,
All human doth excel;
And ſhines moſt glorious in our eye,
Beyond all parellel.

For when obnoxious to his wrath,
We wretched ſinners ſtood;
Then his own ſon came to atone
Our guilt with his own blood.

Much more then when that precious blood,
Has clear'd our guilty ſcore,
Shall we be from the wrath to come,
Reſcu'd for evermore.

For if the death of Chriſt ſo far
God's wrath could pacify,
As to procure his very foes
A league of amity;

Much more ſhall we when through his death,
God's favor we regain,
Through his exalted, glorious life,
Eternal bliſs obtain.

Nay more, we in our God rejoice,
Through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord,
By whoſe atonement we are now
To his free love reſtor'd.

But becauſe the next day was the Jews Sabbath, and a feſtival of the paſchal lamb beſides, the Jews haſtened that the bodies ſhould be taken from the croſs, and therefore ſent Pilate to haſten their death, by breaking their legs, that before ſunſet they might be taken away, according to the commandment, and be buried. The ſoldiers therefore came and brake the legs of the two thieves, but eſpying and wondering that Jeſus was already dead, they break not his legs; for the ſcripture foretold, that a bone of him ſhould not be broken, but a ſoldier with his launce pierced his ſide, and immediately there ſtreamed out two rivulets of water & blood.

Some of the primitive fathers give an account, that the holy virgin mother (whoſe ſoul during the whole paſſion was pierced with a ſword, and ſharper ſorrows, tho' ſhe was ſupported by the comforts of faith and thoſe holy predictions of his reſurrection, and future glories, which Mary had laid up in her heart againſt this great day of trial) now that ſhe ſaw her bleſſed Son had ſuffered all that our neceſſities, and their malice could require or inflict, cauſed ſome of his followers, with whom ſhe joined, to take her dead ſon from the croſs, which ſhe kiſſed and embraced with

all the endearments that could be expreſſed by a ſorrowful mother, weeping for her dead ſon. Yet ſhe was highly ſatisfied by conſidering that now that great myſtery, determined by divine predeſtination, before the beginning of all ages was fulfilled in her ſon, and the paſſion that was abſolutely neceſſary, was now accompliſhed. She therefore firſt bathes his body with her warm tears, and delivering a winding napkin to Joſeph of Arimathea, gave him a charge to enwrapt the body, and embalm and do all the funeral rights, to compoſe it decently to the grave, having firſt exhorted him to make a public confeſſion of his faith, as to the divinity of our holy redeemer, which he had only hitherto made profeſſion of in private. Joſeph obeyed the council of ſo excellent a perſon, and ventured upon the diſpleaſure of the Jewiſh rulers, and went confidently to Pilate, and begged the body of Jeſus.

Joſeph therefore takes the body, binds his head with a napkin, waſhes the body, anoints it with ointment, and a compoſition of myrrh and aloes, and brings it to the tomb, which he himſelf had hewn out of a rock; all theſe circumſtances being uſed by the Jews in their funerals; but it was not lawful to inter a condemned perſon in

their common burying places. When the ſun was ſet, the chief Prieſts and Phariſees went to Pilate, telling him that Jeſus while he was living, foretold his own reſurrection on the third day, and leſt his diſciples ſhould come and ſteal the body, and ſay he was riſen from the dead, deſired that the ſepulchre might be ſecured againſt the danger of any ſuch impoſture; Pilate gave them leave to do their pleaſure, they therefore ſealed the grave, rolled a great ſtone at the mouth of it, and as ancient traditions ſay, bound it about with labels of iron and ſet a watch of ſoldiers, as if they intended to make it ſurer than the decree of fate, or the never failing laws of nature.

When it was yet early in the morning, upon the firſt day of the week, Mary Magdalen, and Mary the mother of James and Salome, brought ſweet ſpices to the ſepulchre, that they might again embalm the holy body, for the rites of embalming among the Hebrews, uſed to laſt forty days, their love being not ſatisfied with what Joſeph had done. They therefore haſtened to the grave, & after the expence they had been at, began to conſider, who ſhould remove the ſtone, but they ſtill go on, their love carrying them through all difficulties. But when they came to the ſepulchre, they found the

guard from whom they might expect oppoſition affrighted and removed, and the ſtone rolled away, for juſt before there had been a great earthquake, and an angel deſcending from heaven, rolled away the ſtone, and ſat upon it, and the guards were like dead men. And ſome of them ran to the high prieſts, & told them what had happened; but they reſolving now to add to their iniquity by a new crime, hire the ſoldiers to tell an incredible and weak fable, that his diſciples came by night and ſtole him away: Tho' the wit of man could not have invented more ſtrong ſecurity than they did to prevent any ſuch deſign than themſelves had.

The women entered into the ſepulchre, and miſſing the body of Jeſus, Mary Magdalen went to the eleven Apoſtles, complaining that the body of our Lord was not to be found. Then Peter and John ran as faſt as they could to ſee for the unexpectedneſs of the relation made them to doubt of the truth, their faith of his reſurrection not being yet fixed in them, and the ſparks thereof not raiſed into a flame. They looked into the ſepulchre, and not finding the body there, they returned; by this time Mary Magdalen, and the women who ſtood weeping for their Lord's body, ſaw the two

angels ſitting in white, the one at the head, and the other at the feet, at which unexpected ſight, they trembled and bowed themſelves, but the angels bid them not fear: telling them, that Jeſus of Nazareth who was crucified was alſo riſen, and was not there, and made them call to mind what Jeſus had told them in Galilee, concerning his crucifixion, and reſurrection the third day.

And Mary turned herſelf back, and ſaw Jeſus, but ſuppoſing him to be the gardener, ſhe ſaid to him, ſir, if you have borne him hence, tell me where thou haſt laid him, and I will take him away; but Jeſus ſaid unto her, Mary. Then ſhe knew his voice, and with extaſy of joy and wonder, was ready to have fallen at his feet, and embraced them, but he commanded her not to touch him, but to go to his brethren, and ſay I aſcend to my father, and your father, my God, and your God. Mary departed full of joy and ſatisfaction, and told theſe things to the apoſtles, but her relation ſeemed altogether fantaſtic and imaginary. About the ſame time alſo Jeſus appeared to Simon Peter; and towards evening to two of his diſciples going diſconſolately to Emaus, and diſcourſing of the late occurences, Jeſus puts himſelf in their company,

and upbraids their incredulity, and expounds the ſcriptures, that Chriſt ought to ſuffer, and riſe again the third day, and in breaking of bread, diſappeared, and ſo was known to them by vaniſhing away, whom, when preſent, they knew not: and inſtantly they haſten to Jeruſalem, and told the diſciples what had happened.

While they were there, the ſame day at evening, when the diſciples were aſſembled all but Thomas, ſecretly for fear of the Jews, the doors being ſhut, Jeſus came and ſtood in the midſt of them, and they were exceedingly troubled, ſuppoſing it had been a ſpirit. But Jeſus confuted them by appealing to their ſenſes, and letting them feel his fleſh and bones, which ſpirits have not; at which ſight they rejoiced with exceeding joy, and began to be reſtored to their languiſhing hopes of ſome future felicity, by the return of their Lord to life; and there he firſt breathed on them, giving them the Holy Ghoſt, and performing the promiſe twice made before his death, ſaying, *Whoſoever ſins ye remit, ſhall be remitted to them, and whoſoever ſins ye retain, they are retained.* Theſe things Thomas was acquainted with, and reſolved not to believe, unleſs he might put his finger into the holes in his hands, and his

hands into his ſide; which Jeſus, 8 days after, at another appearance to the apoſtles, made demonſtration of to him, but with a mild reproof to his unbelief, promiſing a ſpecial bleſſing to all ſucceeding ages of the church, for they are ſuch as ſaw not, but yet believed.

But Jeſus at his early appearing had ſent an order by the women, that the diſciples ſhould go into Galilee, and they did ſo after a few days; and Simon Peter being there, went a fiſhing, and ſix other of the apoſtles with him, to go to the ſea of Tiberias, where they labored all night, and caught nothing. Towards the morning Jeſus appeared to them, and bid them caſt the net on the right ſide of the ſhip, which they did, and incloſed one hundred and fifty great fiſhes; by which prodigious draught, John the beloved diſciple perceived it was the Lord. At which inſtant, Peter threw himſelf into the ſea, and went to Jeſus, and when the reſt were come aſhore, they all dined with broiled fiſh.—After dinner Jeſus taking care of thoſe ſcattered ſheep which were diſperſed over the face of the earth, that he might gather them into one ſheep-fold, under one ſhepherd, aſked Peter, Simon ſon of Jonas, *loveſt thou me more than theſe?* Peter an-

ſwered, *Yea, Lord, thou knoweſt all things; thou knoweſt that I love thee.* Then Jeſus ſaid unto him, *Feed my ſheep.* And Jeſus aſked him the ſame queſtion, and gave him the ſame precept, the ſecond and third time; and after intruſting this charge to him, Jeſus told him, that the reward he ſhould have in this world, ſhould be a ſharp and honorable martyrdom; he likewiſe checks Peter's curioſity in inquiring what ſhould become of the beloved diſciple, and anſwered his queſtion with ſome ſharpneſs of reprehenſion, and no ſatisfaction; *If I will that he tarry 'till I come, what is that to thee?* Which made them ſuppoſe he ſhould not die, but they were miſtaken; for though John lived 'till after the deſtruction of Jeruſalem, notwithſtanding the attempts of perſecutors, and the miraculous eſcape from prepared torments, yet he died a natural death, when he was about ninety years of age.

After this, Jeſus having appointed a ſolemn meeting for all the brethren that could be collected from the diſperſion, and named a certain mountain in Galilee, appeared to 500 brethren at once, and this was his moſt public and ſolemn manifeſtation; and while ſome doubted, Jeſus came according to the deſignation, and

ſpake to the eleven diſciples ſending them to preach to all the world, repentance and remiſſion of ſins in his name, promiſing to be with them to the end of the world.— Laſt of all, when the apoſtles were at dinner, he appeared unto them, upbraiding their unbelief, and then opened their underſtandings that they might diſcern the ſenſe of ſcripture, and again commanded them to preach the goſpel to all the world, giving them power to do miracles, to caſt out devils, to cure diſeaſes, and inſtituted the ſacrament of baptiſm, which he commanded (together with the good tidings of the goſpel) ſhould be adminiſtered to all nations in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghoſt. Then he led them into Judea, and they came to Bethany, and from thence to the mount of Olives, and he commanded them to ſtay in Jeruſalem, till the Holy Ghoſt, the promiſe of the Father ſhould deſcend upon them, which ſhould be accompliſhed in a few days, and then they ſhould know the times and the ſeaſons, and all things neceſſary for their miniſtration and ſervice, and propagation of the goſpel; and while he diſcourſed many things concerning the kingdom, behold a cloud came and parted Jeſus from them, and carried him in

their ſight up to heaven, where he ſits at the right hand of God, bleſſed forever.

While the apoſtles ſtood gazing up to heaven, two angels appeared to them, and told them, that Jeſus ſhould come in like manner as he was taken away, with glory and majeſty in the clouds, and with the miniſtry of angels. Amen. *Come, Lord Jeſus, come quickly.*

THE PRAYER.

O *Holy and eternal Jeſus, who haſt overcome death, and triumphed over all the powers of hell, darkneſs, ſin, and the grave, miniſeſting the truth of thy promiſes, the power of thy divinity, the majeſty of thy perſon, the rewards of thy glory, and the mercies and excellent deſigns of thy evangelical kingdom, by thy glorious and powerful reſurrection, preſerve our ſouls from eternal death, and make us to riſe from the death of ſin, and to live the life of grace, loving thy perfections, adoring thy mercy, purſuing the intereſt of thy kingdom, being united to the church, under Thee our Head, conforming to thy holy laws, eſtabliſhed in faith, entertained and confirmed with a modeſt, humble,*

and certain hope, and ſanctified by charity; and engraving Thee in our hearts. Submitting to Thee in our ſpirits, and imitating Thee in thy glorious example, we may be partakers of thy reſurrection, which is our hope and our deſire, the ſupport of our faith, the object of our joy, and the ſtrength of our confidence—In Thee, holy Jeſus, do we truſt; we confeſs thy faith; we believe all that thou haſt taught; we deſire to perform all thy injunctions; our ſouls are in thy hand, do thou ſupport and guide them, and pity our infirmities, and when thou ſhall appear at the great day, ſhew to us the effects of thy advocateſhip, interceſſion and redemption. Thou ſhalt anſwer for us O Lord, for in Thee have we truſted, let us never be confounded. Thou art juſt, thou art merciful, thou art gracious and compaſſionate: thou haſt done miracles and prodigies to us, and all the world; Let not thoſe great actions and ſufferings be ineffectual, but make us capable and receptive of all thy mercies, and then we are certain to receive them; we are thine, O ſave us, thou art ours, O holy Jeſus; O dwell with us for ever, and let us dwell with Thee, adoring and praiſing the eternal glories of God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt. Amen.

Our Father, &c.

THE LIVES OF THE

Holy Evangeliſts, and Apoſtles, with their Martyrdoms, for preaching the Goſpel of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.

AFTER the diſciples had been ſpectators of our bleſſed Redeemer's aſcenſion into heaven, they returned to Jeruſalem, and continued there in prayers and ſupplications in their diſtreſſed condition, the whole city being ſet againſt theſe poor innocent people; they have neither lands nor revenues to maintain them, nor friends at Court to ſupport them againſt their enemies, to whom the name of Jeſus was hateful, and his followers reckoned to be adverſaries to the government; and though in this forlorn ſtate, they comforted themſelves with the precious promiſes their dear maſter left them at his departure, yet their preſent condition ſeemed very deplorable to human appearance; but after they had continued

thus diſconſolate about ten days, our bleſſed Lord performed his promiſe, by ſending the Holy Ghoſt, the comforter, by whom they received fortitude and courage to go forth into the world, and by having the gift of tongues, and ſpeaking to the underſtanding of people of all nations and languages, they were capable of inſtructing them in the higheſt myſteries of chriſtianity, and to convince and confound their moſt ſubtle oppoſers ; by theſe divine aids they preached with ſuch efficacy, that St. Peter converted three thouſand ſouls in one day, by one ſermon, and in a few years the chriſtian doctrine was ſo diſperſed over the world, that the Roman Emperors were apprehenſive of their numbers ; moſt countries under the empire being filled with multitudes of them ; and in proceſs of time, though they ſuffered the greateſt torments from their enemies, yet their faith triumphed over the torments, whips, and ſwords of the mighty tyrants of the earth, when there was no temptations of profit, pleaſure, or advantage, but on the contrary, pain, miſery, and the moſt cruel deaths attended the ſame.

After the death of Judas the traitor, who firſt hanged himſelf, and falling head-

long from the gibbet, he burſt aſunder in the midſt, and all his bowels guſhed out. It is ſuppoſed that the Apoſtles went into ſeveral countries to publiſh the glad tidings of ſalvation; of whoſe preaching and martyrdom I ſhall give a brief account, and begin with St. Matthew.

The Life and Martyrdom of St. MATTHEW the Apoſtle and Evangeliſt, who was ſlain with an halbert in Ethiopia.

His feſtival is by the Weſtern church, celebrated Sept. 21.

ST. MATTHEW, alſo called LEVI, a city belonging to the tribe of Zebulon, where our Saviour was brought up, was the ſon of Alpheus and Mary, ſiſter or kinſwoman to the bleſſed Virgin. His way of life was that of a publican, or toll-gatherer, an office ſcandalous among the Jews, though a place of power, credit and reputation among the Romans, and conferred upon Knights and perſons of quality, but were covetous and great oppreſſors; of which, doubtleſs, Zaccheus, who was one of them, was ſenſible, when after his converſion, he offered four fold in way of reſtitution, to thoſe from whom he had taken any thing by fraud, and evil practices; and upon this account, the

publicans became infamous among the Gentiles alſo; the Jews deteſted them, becauſe this tribute was not only a grievance to their purſes, but an invaſion of the liberties of their nation, they being declared immediately by God himſelf, a free-born people, and therefore reckoned this as a ſtanding inſtance of their ſlavery; ſo that theſe officers were abhorred by them to that degree, that it was unlawful to ſhew them any common kindneſs.

Of this employment was St. Matthew, who is thought to have gathered the cuſtoms of ſuch goods as came by ſea, from Galilee, and the pay of paſſengers that went by water; they kept their Cuſtom-houſe by the ſea ſide, to be near at hand, and here it was that St. Matthew had his office, or receipt of cuſtom; when our Saviour having cured a man grievouſly tortured with the palſy, retired out of Capernaum, to the ſea ſide, where he taught the people that followed him in great numbers, and eſpying Matthew ſitting in his Office, called to him to come and follow him; the man was rich, having a gainful trade, yet he left all his intereſts and relations to become our Lord's diſciple.

After he was elected into the Apoſtleſhip, he continued with the reſt 'till our Lord's aſcenſion, and then for the firſt eight years, it is recorded he preached up and down Judea, after which, being to partake himſelf to the converſion of the Gentile world, the converted Jews entreated him to commit to writing, the hiſtory of our Lord's live and actions, to leave it as a ſtanding record of what he had preached to them; accordingly he compoſed his goſpel. We have little account of the ſufferings and troubles he underwent for the advancement of the chriſtian faith. Some write that he went into Parthia, and having ſucceſsfully planted the goſpel in thoſe parts, he travelled thence into Ethiopia, where by his preaching and miracles, he mightily triumphed over error and idolatry.

As to the manner of his death, it is related by ſome, that he went into the country of the Cannibals, or Men-eaters, where Chriſt appeared to him in the form of a beautiful youth, and gave him a wand, which he pitching in the ground, it immediately grew up into a tree; that he alſo miraculouſly converted the Prince of the Country, and after all, died in peace, and was moſt ſumptuouſly buried;

but others of the ancients, with as much probability affirm, that he ſuffered martyrdom, or was ſlain with a ſword, at a city in Ethiopia.

He was a great inſtance how much power religion has to alter the temper of a man, who being a ſtranger to Chriſt, and in very advantageous worldly circumſtances, yet no ſooner did our bleſſed redeemer call him, but without the leaſt ſcruple or diſſatisfaction, he not only renounced his gainful incomes, but hazarded the diſpleaſure of his maſters the Romans, in whoſe ſervice he was employed, to leave his accounts entangled, and confuſed behind him.

This Apoſtle having written his goſpel, as we have ſaid, at the intreaty of the Jewiſh converts, though others ſay, it was by the command of the Apoſtles, while he was in Paleſtine, eight years after our Saviour's crucifixion, it was carried by St. Bartholomew into India, and left there; he writ it in Hebrew, as primarily deſigned for the uſe of his countrymen. It was no doubt ſoon after tranſlated into Greek, ſome by St. John, others by St. James the leſs. This Hebrew copy was found at Tiberius, by Joſephus, a Jew, and after his converſion, a man of great honor

and eſteem in the days of Conſtantine the Great; one of the ancients aſſures us, there was another copy kept in the library of Cælerea, in his time, and another by the Nazarenes at Berea, from whom he had the liberty to tranſcribe it, and afterwards tranſlated it into Greek and Latin. A copy alſo of this goſpel was dug out of the grave of Barnabas, at Cyprus, tranſcribed with his own hand, but theſe copies are long ſince periſhed.

The Life of St. MARK, the Evangeliſt, who was dragged through the ſtreets in a City of Egypt 'till he expired.

His feſtival is obſerved by the Roman church, April 25.

THOUGH this great Evangeliſt ſeems to have a Roman name, Mark or Marcus, yet doubtleſs he was born of Jewiſh parents, originally deſcended from the Tribe of Levi, and of the Prieſtly line; the reaſon for changing his name from Jewiſh to Roman, was probably from ſome great accident of his life, uſual among the Jews, when travelling to the European Provinces of the Roman Empire, he being then going to Italy or Rome.

By the ancients he is thought to be one of the ſeventy diſciples, who taking exception at our Saviour's diſcourſe of eating his fleſh, and drinking his blood, went back and walked no more with him at that time, but was ſeaſonably reduced and reclaimed by St. Peter; but others as ſtrenuouſly affirm, that he was no hearer nor follower of Chriſt, and therefore could be none of them, who upon that occaſion forſook him. He was converted by ſome of the Apoſtles, and probably by St. Peter, who calls him his ſon Marcus, and who was his conſtant attendant in his travels, and ſaid to be his emanuenſis, or writer of what the Apoſtle dictated, and likewiſe his interpreter. For though the Apoſtles were divinely inſpired, and had the gift of languages, yet the interpretation of tongues was a privilege more peculiar to ſome than others. This might probably be St. Mark's talent, in expounding St. Peter's diſcourſes and writings, to thoſe who did not underſtand them.

He accompanied St. Peter in his Apoſtolical progreſs, in preaching the Goſpel in Italy and Rome, as it is related, where, at the requeſt of the Chriſtians in thoſe parts, he compoſed his goſpel. By St. Peter he was ſent to plant chriſtianity in

Egypt, and reſided in and about Alexandria for ſome time, and was ſo ſucceſsful in his miniſtry, that he converted multitudes of all ranks and degrees, to the embracing of the Chriſtian faith, and an extraordinary profeſſion thereof.

St. Mark did not confine his miniſtry to Alexandria, and the Eaſtern parts of Egypt, but traveiled Weſtward to Lybia, Marmaria, and Pentapolis, where, though the people were barbarous, yet, by his preaching and miracles, the goſpel prevailed, he not leaving them 'till he had gained and confirmed them in the profeſſion of the faith; returning to Alexandria, he preached freely, and ſet in order the affairs of the church, and wiſely provided for ſucceſſion, by conſtituting governors and paſtors of it; but the reſtleſs enemies of the ſoul of man, would not ſuffer him long to live in quiet.

About the time of Eaſter, happened the great ſolemnity of the Egyptian Deity Serapis; when the minds of the people being paſſionately excited to a vindication of the honor of their heathen Idol, broke in upon St. Mark, in the time of Divine Worſhip, and binding his feet with cords, dragged him through the ſtreets, to a precipice near the ſea, and thruſt him

into priſon for that night, where he was encouraged by a divine viſion, to continue conſtant under the ruins of his ſhattered body. Early the next morning, theſe blood-hounds renewed their barbarities, dragging him about in the ſame manner, 'till his fleſh being raked off, and his blood ſtreaming all the way, his ſpirits failed him, and he expired, but their malice ended not with his life, for it is recorded, that when he was dead, they burnt his body, and the Chriſtians carefully gathering his aſhes, decently buried them near the place where he was wont to preach, and put them in an urn, which, with much ſolemnity, was afterwards removed from Alexandria to Venice, where we are told it now lies interred, and is religiouſly honored by the people: St. Mark being adopted to be the Tutelar Saint of that Republic, and has as magnificent a Church erected to his memory, as the World can boaſt of. He is reported to have ſuffered martyrdom April twenty-five, but whether in the reign of Claudius or Nero, is uncertain. As to his perſon, he was of a middle ſtature, as the ancients record, of a comely preſence, his noſe long, his eyes full of amiableneſs, and all the deſirable qualities of a lovely perſon.

The converts at Rome, not content to have heard St. Peter preach, preſſed St. Mark, as we have ſaid, to commit to writing what he preached to them, by way of hiſtory, which he performed with much faithfulneſs and brevity, all which, St. Peter, it is ſaid, peruſed and ratified with his Apoſtolical authority, commanding it to be owned and preſerved with the reſt of the canonical ſcripture, and his great impartiality in his relation doth clearly appear, that he is ſo far from concealing or mollifying the ſhameful fall and denial of his dear maſter, and tutor, St. Peter, to whom he was ſo deeply engaged in the bands of love, that he records it with ſome particular weighty circumſtances and aggravations, which the other Evangeliſts have thought fit to omit.

Some affirm, that his Goſpel was written originally in the Latin tongue, becauſe he publiſhed it at Rome; but it is manifeſt by the moſt ancient authority, that the Jews, who heard St. Mark preach, being ſtrangers at Rome, knew but very little Latin, the Greek being at that time the moſt faſhionable and communicative language in the World, nor can any good reaſon be aſſigned why it ſhould be more inconvenient for St. Mark to write his

Goſpel in Greek, for the uſe of the Romans, than that St. Paul ſhould in that very language write his epiſtle to the church there.

The original Greek copy, written with St. Mark's own hand, is ſaid to be extant at Venice to this day, being written as ſome inform us, at Aquilea, and thence after many hundred years, tranſmitted to Venice, where it is ſtill preſerved as an ancient monument, but the letters ſo defaced by time, as not legible, but it being of no conſequence as to the authenticneſs of its original, it is not worth contending for.

The Life of St. LUKE the Evangeliſt, who was hanged upon an Olive tree in Greece.

His feſtival is obſerved October 18.

ST. LUKE was born at Antioch, the metropolis of Syria, eminent for the pleaſantneſs of its ſoil, the riches of its traffic, the wiſdom of its Senate, the learning of its profeſſors, and the civility and politeneſs of the inhabitants, celebrated by the pens of ſome of the moſt eloquent of that age; but particularly renowned for the honor, that here it was that the diſciples were firſt called Chriſtians. It is record-

ed, that he ſtudied at moſt ſchools both of Greece and Egypt, whereby he became learned in all human ſciences, but he more particularly applied himſelf to the practice of phyſic, for which the Grecian Academies were very famous, beſides which he is ſaid to be ſkilful in the art of painting, and three or four famous pieces are ſhewed in Italy, ſaid to be his drawings; there is alſo an ancient inſcription in the *Via Lactea* at Rome, in an old vault near the church of St. Mary, ſuppoſed to have been the place where St Paul dwelt, wherein mention is made of the picture of the bleſſed virgin, which the Italians call a Madona, or Lady, that with ſix others were drawn by the ſame Evangeliſt.

St. Luke was no doubt a Jewiſh proſelyte, Antioch abounding with men of that nation, who had their ſynagogues and ſchools of education, and ſuppoſed to be one of the ſeventy diſciples; and likewiſe one of the two who were going to Emaus, to whom the Lord appeared in their way; theſe ſeem only conjectures; for beſides other arguments, he himſelf confeſſed plainly, that he was not from the beginning an eye witneſs and miniſter of the word. It is therefore more probable that he was converted by St. Paul during

his abode in Antioch; and became ever after his inſeparable companion, and fellow-laborer in the work of the miniſtry, eſpecially after his going into Macedonia, from which time, in recording the hiſtory of St. Paul's travels, he upon all occaſions, ſpeaks of himſelf in his own perſon; he attended in all his dangers, and at his ſeveral arraignments at Jeruſalem, and in his hazardous voyage to Rome; and it is probable he did not leave St. Paul, 'till he had finiſhed his courſe, and crowned all his ſufferings with martyrdom; though ſome aver that he left the Apoſtle at Rome, and returned back into the Eaſt; travelling into Egypt, and the parts of Lybia, where according to his cuſtom he preached the Goſpel, wrought miracles, converted multitudes, conſtituted miniſters, and that himſelf became Biſhop of Thebais.

He wrote two books for the uſe and benefit of the church, his goſpel, and the hiſtory of the acts of the Apoſtles, both which he dedicated to Theophilus; ſome of the ancients ſuppoſe this to be a feigned name, denoting no more than a lover of God, a title common to every chriſtian. Others, that it was the proper name of a particular perſon, the ſtile of Moſt

Excellent, being in thoſe times the proper form of addreſs to princes and great men; and that he was of Conſular dignity, and a Nobleman of Antioch, who, when converted by St. Peter, gave his houſe to the church for their public and ſolemn worſhip; and others think he might be ſome chief man in authority, whom St. Luke had converted and baptized, to whom he dedicated theſe books, as a teſtimony of honorable reſpect, and a mean of giving him farther light into the certainty of thoſe things, wherein he had been inſtructed by him; he expreſsly telling us, that his intelligence in thoſe matters was derived from ſuch as were eye-witneſſes and miniſters of the word from the beginning, having delivered nothing in his whole hiſtory, but what he had immediately received from perſons preſent at, and particularly concerned in the things he has left upon record.

The occaſion of his writing his goſpel, ſeems to be partly to prevent thoſe falſe and ſcandalous reports, which, even at that time were raiſed by the enemies to the Chriſtian name; and partly to ſupply what was wanting in the two Evangeliſts who writ before him; which ſupplement is particularly noted throughout his whole

hiſtory, by ſome of the primitive fathers: the ſubject matter of the ſame being an account of what relates to Chriſt's Prieſtly office, and therefore the ancients in accommodating the Prophet Ezekiel's viſion, of four ſymbolical repreſentations to the four Evangeliſts, aſſigned the ox or calf to St. Luke.

His hiſtory of the Apoſtolic Acts, was undoubtedly written at Rome, at the end of St. Paul's two years impriſonment there, with which he concludes his ſtory; which contains the actions, and ſometimes the ſufferings of ſome of the chief Apoſtles, particularly St. Paul, whoſe activity in the cauſe of Chriſt and the Goſpel, made him have a deeper ſhare both in doing and ſuffering; and St. Luke being his conſtant attendant, and an eye-witneſs of the moſt conſiderable tranſactions of his life, after his converſion, was the more capable of giving an accurate relation of them; among other things he records thoſe wonderful miracles which the Apoſtles wrought for confirmation of the doctrine they daily preached. In both theſe books his ſtyle is clear, flowing with a natural ſweetneſs and grace; he was faithful in his relations, elegant in his writing as a Miniſter, devout and pious as a Chriſtian, careful

and diligent for the good of ſouls, and to crown all, laid down his life for the teſtimony of the Goſpel, which he had preached and publiſhed to the world.

An ancient author labors to prove, that he ſuffered martyrdom at Rome, after St. Paul's firſt impriſonment there, and therefore did no farther proſecute the hiſtory of the Acts of the Apoſtles, which he would undoubtedly have done, had he lived any conſiderable time after St. Paul's departure. But Nicephorous, gives a particular account, That travelling into Greece, he ſucceſsfully preached, and baptized many converts into the Chriſtian faith, which ſo enraged the barbarians, that a crew of villains laying hold of him, tortured him in a moſt violent manner, and then dragging him to execution, deſigned to crucify him; but coming to the place where they intended to perpetrate the reſt of their villainy, they could not find a croſs to fix him upon, but lighting upon an olive tree, they hanged him thereon, in the eighty-fourth year of his age. His body was with great ſolemnity buried at Conſtantinople, by the command of Conſtantine the Great, or his ſon, in that famous church erected there, to the memory of the Apoſtles.

The Life of St. JOHN, the Evangeliſt and Apoſtle, who was put into a chaldron of ſcalding oil, and eſcaped unhurt.

His feſtival is celebrated December 27th.

ST. JOHN was a Galilean, the ſon of Zebedee and Salome, younger brother to St. James, together with whom he was employed in fiſhing. By his coming to Chriſt, he ſeems for ſome time to have been a diſciple to John the Baptiſt, being probably that other diſciple that was with Andrew, when they left the Baptiſt to follow our Saviour, ſo particularly does he relate all circumſtances of theſe tranſactions, though modeſtly, as in other parts of his Goſpel concealing his own name.

There is not much mentioned of him in ſacred writ more than what is recorded of him in conjunction with his brother James, he was peculiarly dear to his Lord and maſter, being the diſciple whom Jeſus loved, witneſs his lying in our Saviour's boſom, at the paſchal ſupper, as alſo when Peter was deſirous to know which of them our Saviour meant, when he ſaid, one of them ſhould betray him, and durſt not himſelf propound the queſtion, he made uſe of St. John, to aſk our Lord. Indeed when Chriſt was firſt apprehen-

ded, he fled with the other Apoſtles, it not being without probability of reaſon, that the ancients conceived him to have been that young man, who followed after our Saviour, having a linen cloth caſt about his naked body, whom when the officers laid hold upon, he left the cloth, and fled naked from them, but though he eſcaped at preſent, to avoid that ſudden violence which was offered him, yet he ſoon recovered himſelf, and returned to ſeek his maſter, and waited upon him through the ſeveral paſſages of his trial, 'till his crucifixion. Here it was that our Saviour appointed him guardian of his mother, and made her a part of his charge and care. At the firſt news of our Lord's reſurrection, he accompanied Peter to the ſepulchre, thoſe two Apoſtles having a more mutual intimacy than any of the reſt, and had ran many hazards together, and adhered cloſely to one another upon all occaſions.

The ancients ſay, that after the death of the bleſſed Virgin, St. John went into Aſia, and applied himſelf wholly to the propagating of chriſtianity, having planted ſeveral famous churches there; after ſome years continuance there, he was accuſed to Domitian, the bloody perſecu-

ting Roman Emperor, as a ſubverter of the religion of the Empire, by whoſe command the Conſul of Aſia ſent him bound to Rome, where it is related, he was put into a chaldron of burning oil; but the divine providence delivered this holy man from this ſeeming inevitable deſtruction unhurt; the cruel emperor not being ſatisfied with this, orders him to be baniſhed to Patmos, a deſolate Iſland in Greece, where he remained ſeveral years, inſtructing the inhabitants in the faith of Chriſt. Here it was that about the latter end of Domitian's reign, he writ the book of the Revelations.

Bloody Domitian being taken out of the way, Coicerus Nerva ſucceeded in the Empire, who being of a milder temper, repealed the barbarous edicts of his predeceſſor, re-calling thoſe that were baniſhed for the Chriſtian name, whereupon St. John left Patmos, and returned into Aſia, fixing his reſidence at Epheſus, where it is ſaid he writ three Epiſtles, which, with the apocalypſe, are all repoſed in the ſacred Canons, and univerſally admired.—He lived 'till the time of the Emperor Trajan, about the beginning of whoſe reign, he departed this life, about the ninety-ninth year of his age, as is gene-

rally thought. But others ſuppoſe he died a martyr, becauſe our Saviour told him and his brothers, that they ſhould drink of the cup, and be baptiſed with the baptiſm wherewith he was baptiſed, which was indeed literally fulfilled with his brother James; yet though he was not murdered, he may truly be ſtyled a martyr, his being put into a veſſel of ſcalding oil, as we have noted, his many years baniſhment, and other ſufferings for the cauſe of Chriſt, juſtly challenging that title; it being not want of good will either in him, or his enemies, but the divine providence immediately over-ruling the power of nature, that prevented the malice of his adverſaries from putting their cruel intentions into execution.

Others deny that he died at all, but is ſtill alive; the occaſion of which error is founded upon what paſſed between our bleſſed Saviour and St. Peter, concerning this Apoſtle, for Chriſt having told Peter what ſhould be his own fate, Peter enquires what will become of St. John, to whom our Lord anſwered, *If I will that he tarry 'till I come, what is that to thee?* which was miſunderſtood by the Apoſtles, though St. John himſelf, who records that paſſage, inſerts a caution, that Jeſus did

not ſay he ſhould not die. From the ſame original alſo came the tradition, that he only lay ſleeping in his grave at Epheſus, which ſtory was a long time current. He ſeems to have always led a ſingle life, and ſo the ancients tell us, that all the Apoſtles were married, except St. John and St. Paul. He had no great advantages by human learning, but his want of it was abundantly ſupplied in his excellent temper of mind and the furniture of divine graces, which he was adorned withal. His humility was admirable, ſtudiouſly concealing his own worth and honor. He diſcovered a mighty affection to the ſons of men, unwearied in ſpending himſelf for the ſervice of the Goſpel; travelling from Eaſt to Weſt, to leaven the World with that holy religion, which he was ſent to propagate. He was extremely vigilent againſt heretics, countermining their artifices, antidoting againſt the poiſon of their errors, and avoiding all communion and converſation with their perſons.

The Life of St. PETER, the Apoſtle, who was crucified at Rome with his head downwards.

His feſtival is celebrated June 20.

ST. PETER was born at Bethſaida, a place that had the honor of our Saviour's preſence, who reſiding uſually in thoſe parts, did often reſort thither. He is generally thought to be about ten years older than his maſter, which the married condition, and the reſpect ſhewed him by the reſt of the Apoſtles for the gravity of his perſon, with other circumſtances, ſeems to confirm. Being circumciſed according to the law, his name then given him, was Simon, to which our bleſſed Lord added that of Cephas, ſignifying a ſtone, or rock, which is rendered Peter in Engliſh. He was brother to St. Andrew the Apoſtle, who firſt brought him to the knowledge of the Goſpel. Their father was Jonah of Bethſaida, probably a fiſherman, who had the honor, as well as Zebedee, to have each of them two of their ſons among our Saviour's Apoſtles, though but twelve in number. Peter was employed in fiſhing in the ſea of Galilee, being one hundred furlongs in length, and forty in

breadth, the waters clear and ſweet, and ſtored with ſeveral ſorts of choice fiſh.

And here let us admire the wonderful methods of divine providence, that ſuch low and mean men, ſhould be armed with divine power, as to ruin the kingdom of ſatan. The vile apoſtate Julian, objected againſt the prophets of the old teſtament, that they were a company of rude, illeterate men; but we find that theſe unlearned men and innocent Apoſtles, by the aſſiſtance of the Almighty, ſuddenly and powerfully prevailed over the learned world.

Our Saviour deſigning to elect ſome peculiar perſons to propagate his goſpel through all nations, made choice of twelve to be his Apoſtles, and Simon Peter is by the Evangeliſts, in the front of them. It may be enquired when, and by whom the Apoſtles were baptiſed. Nicephorus relates, that of all the Apoſtles, Chriſt baptiſed none but Peter with his own hand, and Peter baptiſed Andrew, and the two ſons of Zebedee, and the reſt of the Apoſtles. Among the twelve our Saviour choſe three, who ſeem to be his near intimate companions, and whom he let into the moſt ſecret paſſages and tranſactions of his life, namely, Peter, James, and John,

they being with him at the raiſing of Jairus's daughter, as alſo at his transfiguration on the mount, where Peter deſired our Lord, that he might build three tabernacles in memory of that great tranſaction: One author writes, that in purſuance of this petition, there were afterwards three churches built upon the top of this mountain; and one writer reports, that in his time, they ſhewed the ruins of theſe three tabernacles, which were built according to St. Peter's deſire.

After our Lord had entered Jeruſalem in triumph, he retired to Bethany, and diſpatched Peter and John, to make a preparation for the paſſover; accordingly they found the perſon whom he had deſcribed to them, and followed him to his houſe, which, whether it was St. John the Evangeliſt, ſituate near Mount Sion, or Simon the leper, or Nicodemus, or Joſeph of Arimathea, is uncertain. Theſe two, with St. James, accompanied him to the garden in his agony; and Euſebius writes, that even in his time, Chriſtians were wont to come thither, ſolemnly to offer up their prayers to God and Chriſt Jeſus. Our Lord being aſcended into Heaven, and having fulfilled his promiſe of ſending the Holy Ghoſt, the Apoſtles and diſci-

ples continued a while at Jeruſalem, being toſſed about only with gentle ſtorms, but upon occaſion of the martyrdom of St. Stephen, a violent perſecution fell upon them—which diſperſed them into ſeveral countries; about the end of the reign of Caligula, that barbarous Roman Emperor, Peter, after having viſited the churches, returned to Jeruſalem, and Herod Agrippa, grandſon to Herod the great, having attained the kingdom of Judea, he, to ingratiate himſelf with the people, put St. James to death, and finding this grateful to the vulgar, apprehended Peter, and ſent him to priſon, placing ſtrong guards to ſecure him, but the Angel of the Lord delivered him in the night, before his enemies deſigned to execute him; but before this, he is ſaid to have gone down to Antioch, and to have planted the Chriſtian faith, and founded a church there, as Euſebius and others record.

After this he went to Rome, about the ſecond year of the Emperor Claudius, and being mindful of the Churches which he had gathered in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Bythinia, and Aſia the leſs, writ his firſt Epiſtle to them, and then took care to propagate the Chriſtian faith in the Weſtern parts of the World; after

he had continued ſome years at Rome, the Jews raiſing ſeditions and tumults in the city, they were baniſhed from thence; among whom was St. Peter, who from thence returned back to Jeruſalem, and was preſent at the great Apoſtolical Synod, where the controverſy about the Moſaical rites was determined; ſome report, that he went into Britain, and converted many to Chriſtianity. But toward the end of Nero's reign, he returned to Rome, where he found the peoples' minds hardened againſt embracing the Chriſtian Religion, by the ſubtilties and magick arts of Simon Magus; this impoſtor reſided in Samaria, where St. Phillip the Deacon, preached with much ſucceſs, confirming the ſame by miracles; however, Simon was in great reputation among the people, and ſtiled himſelf, The Great Power of God, and affirmed that he was the Supreme Deity, worſhipped by all nations, the Apoſtles ſent Peter and John from Jeruſalem, to Philip's aſſiſtance, who when they came thither, laid their hands upon the new converts, whereupon they preſently received the Holy Ghoſt, which, when Simon ſaw, he offered them money, if they would confer that power upon him. But Peter perceiving his vile intentions,

ſcornfully rejected his impious offer.—— However, by his witchcrafts and ſorceries, he at length became acceptable to the Emperor, as well as the vulgar, Nero, that monſter had much veneration for him, being patron of Magicians, and all thoſe who pretended to have commerce with the infernal powers, and Peter being returned to Rome, reſolved to encounter him, and diſcover the impoſtures and deluſions of this wretched man.

About that time, an éminent young gentleman, kinſman to the Emperor, died at Rome, and the fame of Peter's having power to raiſe the dead, his friends were perſuaded to ſend for him, but others propoſed Simon Magus, who readily came, being glad of the occaſion to magnify himſelf before the people, and Peter being preſent, Simon alledged, that he had provoked the great power of God, and ſhould loſe his life if he did not raiſe the dead perſon, but if Peter prevailed, he himſelf would ſubmit to the ſame fate. Peter accepted the terms, and Simon began his charms and enchantments, whereat the dead gentleman ſeemed to move his hand, upon which the people ſhouted, and cried he was alive, and talked to Simon, and began to aſſault Peter; the Apoſtle

intreated their patience, and told them, it was nothing but fancy and appearance, and that if Simon were removed from the bed-ſide, this deluſion would ſoon vaniſh; which done, the body remained without the leaſt ſign of motion, Peter ſtanding at a good diſtance from the bed, ſilently made his addreſs to Heaven, and then, before them all, commanded the young man in the name of the Lord Jeſus to ariſe, which he did immediately, and ſpoke, walked and eat, and was by Peter reſtored to his mother. The people thereupon altered their opinions, and fell upon Simon, with intent to have ſtoned him, but Peter begged his life, and told them, it would be puniſhment enough for him, to ſee, that in deſpite of his malice, the Kingdom of Chriſt would increaſe and flouriſh.

The Magician was inwardly tormented with his defeat, and vexed to ſee the triumph of the Apoſtle, and muſtering up all his infernal powers, acquainted the people, that he was offended at the Galileans, as he called the Chriſtians, and therefore ſet a day, when they ſhould ſee him fly up to Heaven; accordingly, he went up to the top of the Capitol, and throwing himſelf thence, began his flight,

which the ſpectators beheld with wonder and admiration, affirming that it muſt be from the power of God, and not of man; Peter ſtanding in the crowd, prayed to God, that the people might be undeceived, and that the vanity of the impoſtor might be diſcovered, to the confuſion of him, and ſhame of his admirers; immediately the wings which he had made himſelf, began to fail, ſo that he fell to the ground, miſerably bruiſed with the fall, and being carried to a neighboring village, died ſoon after.

The end of this wretched man, coming to the Emperor's ear, haſtened St. Peter's death. Nero, no doubt had been formerly diſpleaſed with him, on account of his Chriſtianity, and that he ſo ſtrictly preached up temperance and chaſtity, and thereby reclaimed ſo many women in Rome from a diſſolute and vicious life, which was ſo diſagreeable to his wanton and laſcivious temper, to which he was a ſlave; and being by his means robbed of his dear favorite and companion, he reſolved upon revenge, cauſed St. Peter, as alſo St. Paul, who was at that time at Rome, to be caſt into the maritime priſon, where they employed themſelves in preaching to the priſoners, and thoſe who viſited them;

and here it is ſuppoſed St. Peter writ his ſecond Epiſtle to the diſperſed Jews, to confirm them in the faith, and fortify them againſt thoſe pernicious principles and practices, which even then began to break in upon the Chriſtian Church.

Nero returning from Achaia, and entering Rome with triumph, reſolved St. Peter ſhould fall a ſacrifice to his cruelty. Whilſt the fatal ſtroke was daily expected, the Chriſtians at Rome earneſtly ſolicited him to make his eſcape, and reſerve himſelf for further ſervice to the Church; which at length prevailed with him, and the next night, having prayed with, and taken his leave of the brethren, it is related, that he got over the priſon wall, and being come to the city gate, he is there ſaid to have met our Lord, who was juſt then entering the city; Peter, it is ſaid, aſked him, Lord, whither art thou going? From whom he preſently received this anſwer: I am come to Rome to be crucified the ſecond time; by which reply Peter apprehended himſelf to be reproved, and that our Lord meant it of his death, that he was to be crucified as his ſervant, and ſo went back to the priſon, and ſurrendered himſelf to the keeper,

as being ready to acquieſce in the will of God.

Before his ſufferings he was ſcourged after the Roman manner, who uſed to whip capital offenders before they ſuffered. Having ſaluted his brethren, and taken his laſt leave of St. Paul, his fellow-priſoner, he was led to the top of the Vatican mount, being ſentenced to be crucified, the moſt painful and ſhameful of all deaths. He then intreated the officers, that he might not be crucified the ordinary way, but ſuffer with his head downward, and feet up to Heaven, as being unworthy to die in the ſame poſture as his bleſſed maſter; his body being taken down, was ſaid to have been embalmed by Marcellinus the Preſbyter, after the Jewiſh way, and then buryed in the Vatican, where it lay obſcurely 'till the reign of Conſtantine the Great, who had ſo much reverence for this Apoſtle, that he built a Church in the vatican to his memory, which is now one of the moſt famous cathedrals in the world. This account of his death, though not mentioned in holy writ, is recorded by the ancient Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtorians, but with what certainty it is, we muſt leave the reader to judge.

The Life of St. JAMES the Great, who was beheaded at Jeruſalem.

His feſtival is celebrated July 25.

ST. James, ſirnamed the Great, either becauſe of his age, or for ſome peculiar honour our Saviour conferred upon him, was a Galilean born, the Son of Zebedee, a fiſherman, his mother's name was Mary, called alſo Salome, he was employed by his father in the trade of fiſhing, in the exerciſe of which our Saviour found him, when he paſſed the ſea of Galilee, where he called him to be his diſciple, which he readily obeyed, leaving his father with his ſervants to manage his affairs, not long after his firſt calling, from the ſtation of an ordinary diſciple, he was appointed to the apoſtolical office, and honoured with ſome peculiar marks of favour beyond moſt of the apoſtles, being one of the three whom our bleſſed Saviour made choice of to admit to the moſt intimate tranſactions of his life.

Thus was Peter, and his brother John, who was preſent at the miraculous raiſing of Jairus' daughter, admitted to Chriſt's glorious transfiguration in the mount, and taken along with him into the garden, to

be a ſpectator of this bitter and terrible agony; nor was it the leaſt inſtance of the particular honor our Saviour beſtowed upon theſe diſciples, that upon his calling of them, he gave them a new name and title.

Our holy Redeemer, in his journey towards Jeruſalem, in order to his crucifixion, that he might the better prepare the minds of his apoſtles for his departure from them, diſcourſed to them about his ſuffering, and that he ſhould riſe again, but they whoſe minds were elevated with the expectation of a temporal power and monarchy, underſtood not the meaning of what he related to them. However, James and his brother, ſuppoſing the reſurrection which he ſpoke of, would be the time when his dignity and greatneſs would commence, perſued their mother to put up a petition for them to our Lord, who accordingly addreſſed him humbly, deſiring, that when he took poſſeſſion of his kingdom, her ſons might have the two principal places of honour and dignity, ſetting one on the right hand and the other on the left. Our bleſſed ſaviour directing his diſcourſe to the two apoſtles, told them, they quite miſtook the nature of his kingdom, which did not conſiſt in

external pomp and ſplendor, but in inward life and power, that they would do well to conſider whether they were able to undergo what he was to ſuffer. They probably not underſtanding the force of his reaſoning, anſwered, they were able to do it. Jeſus taking no advantage of their raſh and inconſiderate reply, anſwered, that as for ſuffering, they would indeed partake of it as well as he, but for any peculiar honour or dignity, he could not diſpoſe of any of that kind, any otherwiſe than according to thoſe rules and inſtructions which he received from his father: The reſt of the apoſtles were offended at this ambitious requeſt, but our dear redeemer to qualify their paſſions, diſcourſed to them at large of the nature of the evangelick ſtate, and the difference between that and the kingdoms of the world; with which excellent reaſoning their hearts on all ſides were allayed and pacified.

What became of St. James after our ſaviour's aſcenſion, we have no account of, either from ſacred or eccleſiaſtick hiſtory, ſome affirm, that after the martyrdom of St. Stephen, when the chriſtians were diſperſt, he came to the weſtern parts of the world, even in Britain and Ireland, and having planted chriſtianity among them,

returned to Jeruſalem, but this ſeems improbable upon ſeveral accounts, and therefore 'tis ſafeſt to confine his miniſtry to Judea, and the parts adjacent and to ſeek for him at Jeruſalem, where we are ſure to find him.

At this time Herod Agrippa, the ſon of Ariſtobulus, being in great favour with Claudius the Roman emperor, he confirmed to him the kindom of Judea, and all the provinces that his grandfather Herod the Great enjoyed, who being ſenſible that the moſt probable way to gain affection of the Jews, was to perſecute the chriſtians, he reſolves accordingly to fall upon them; and finding St. James vigorous in contending for the truth, commanded him to be apprehended, and ſentenced to die; the ſoldier who obſerved his conſtancy and courage at his trial, fell at his feet, begging pardon for what he had done againſt him; the holy man raiſed him up and kiſſed him, who thereupon publickly profeſſed himſelf to be a chriſtian, and ſo they were both beheaded at the ſame time.

His death was not long unrevenged, of which the ancients give the following account—That Herod going to Samaria, he proclaimed ſolemn ſights and feſtival

entertainments to be held in honour of Cæſar; early in the morning, he came in great ſtate to the theatre erected for him, to make an oration to the people, gorgeouſly arrayed in a robe curiouſly wrought with ſilver, gold, and jewels, ſo that the luſtre thereof made the multitude cry out, that he was ſome Deity, and beyond the common ſtandard of humanity: This impious applauſe he received with much pleaſure, but the comic part was ſoon turned into a tragedy; for looking up, he eſpied an owl ſitting over his head, which he inſtantly apprehended as a fatal meſſenger of inevitable ruin, by the juſt judgment of God, and thereupon an incurable melancholy ſeized upon his mind, as well as exquiſite torments on his body. Upon which, turning to thoſe about him—you may here ſee yourſelves evidently convinced of flattery and falſhood; you ſee me, whom you called a God, am by the laws of fate condemned to die, and he whom you counted immortal, ready to give up the ghoſt. His pains continually increaſed upon him, and tho' his favourites prayed earneſtly to the Gods for his health, yet his acute tortures at length put a period to his miſerable life.

The Life of St. JAMES the leſs, who was knocked on the head with a fuller's club.

His feſtival is celebrated, with St. Philip's May 1.

THIS apoſtle is probably conjectured to be the ſon of Joſeph, afterward the huſband of the bleſſed Virgin, by his firſt wife, and ſo reputed our Lord's brother, and the ſon of Joſeph, and tho' he is likewiſe called Alpheus, this may probably relate to his being a diſciple of ſome particular ſect of the Jews, call Alpheans.

We have little account of his birth, and former life, but find that after the reſurrection, he was honoured with the particular appearance of our Lord to him, which tho' not mentioned by the evangeliſts, is recorded by St. Paul, one of the ancients relates, he had ſolemnly ſworn, that from the time he drank the cup, at the inſtitution of the laſt ſupper, he would eat bread no more till our Saviour returned from the grave, who thereupon appeared to him, commanding bread to be ſet before them he took, bleſſed, and brake and gave to St. James, ſaying, Eat thy bread, my brother, for the ſon of man is truly riſen from them that ſleep.

His reſidence was for the moſt part at Jeruſalem, to him we find St. Paul makes

his addreſſes after his converſion, to him St. Paul ſent the news of his miraculous deliverance out of priſon; but he was principally active in the ſynod at Jeruſalem, in the great controverſy about the Moſaick rites. He diſcharged his office like a diligent and faithful guide to ſouls, ſtrengthning the weak, informing the ignorant, reducing the erroneous, reproving the obſtinate, and by the fervency of his preaching, ſubdued the ſtubborneſs of that refractory and perverſe generation; and many principal perſons being brought over to a compliance with the chriſtian faith, it awakened the envy and malice of his enemies to conſpire his ruin; vexed they were that St. Paul, by appealing to Cæſar, had eſcaped their hands, and therefore turn their revenge upon St. James, which not being able to effect under Feſtus' government, they vigorouſly attempted under the procuratorſhip of Albinus his ſucceſſor, before the new government could arrive; to which end a council is ſummoned with all expedition, and the apoſtles and others arraigned and condemned as violators of the law, and for the more plauſible managing their deſigns, they ſet the ſcribes and phariſees to inſnare St. James, inſinuating that they had a very great opinion of his ſanctity, and that the

whole Jewiſh nation gave him the teſtimony of being a juſt man; they therefore deſired that he would reduce the people from their falſe opinion that Jeſus was the Meſſias, and would to the end take the opportunity of the univerſal confluence of people to the paſchal ſolemnity, and go with them to the top of the temple, where he might be ſeen and heard of all, being accordingly placed to advantage upon a pinnacle, or wing of the temple, they thus addreſſed him.

"Tell us, O Juſtus, or James, whom we know and believe to be a righteous man, what is the reaſon that the people are ſo generally led away to adore Jeſus who was crucified at Jeruſalem, and what are the doctrines and precepts which he publiſhed to the world, and where is his reſidence ſince his pretended reſurrection from the dead?" To which the apoſtle anſwered with an audible voice, "why do you inquire of Jeſus the Son of man? He ſits in heaven on the right hand of the majeſty on high, and will come again in the clouds of heaven." The people below hearing this, glorified the bleſſed Jeſus. The ſcribes and phariſees preceiving themſelves diſappointed, and that inſtead of reclaiming, they confirmed the multitude in their ſuppoſed error, thought the

only remedy was to diſpatch him out of the way, that from his ſad fate others might be warned not to perſiſt in the belief of Jeſus, whereupon they ſuddenly cry out, that James himſelf was ſeduced, and become an impoſtor, and threw him down from the place whereon he ſtood, whereby he was ſorely bruiſed, but not killed, ſo that he recovered ſo much ſtrength as to get upon his knees, and pray to heaven for them, vexed that they had not diſpatched him, they fell afreſh upon the remainder of his life; and while he was yet praying, one ſtepping in, and intreating them to ſpare him, a juſt and righteous man, who was crying to heaven to forgive them; began to aſſault him with a ſhower of ſtones, till one more mercifully cruel than the firſt, beat out his brains with a fuller's club.

Thus died this good man in the ninetieth year of his age, and about twenty four years after Chriſt's aſcenſion, to the great grief and regret of all poor men, Jews as well as others, and was buried at mount Olivet, in a tomb which he had built for himſelf, and had therein buried Zacharias, and old Simon. He was of exemplary and extraordinary piety, educated under the ſtricteſt rules and inſtitu-

tion of religion, being as is ſuppoſed, of the ancient order of the Rechabites whoſe buſineſs and delight ſeemed to be to converſe only with heaven, and was wont to retire alone to the temple to pray, which he always performed kneeling, till by his inceſſant devotions, it is related, that his knees became as hard and as brawny as camel's. He writ only one epiſtle, probably not long before his martrydom; he directed it to the Jewiſh converts, diſperſed up and down thoſe eaſtern countries, to comfort them under ſufferings, and to confirm them againſt error.

The Life of St. PHILIP the Apoſtle, who was hanged up againſt a pillar, at Hierapolis, a city of Phrigia.

His feſtival, with that of St. James the leſs, is celebrated May 1.

ST. Philip was born at Bethſaida, near the ſea of Tiberias. We read nothing of his parents, nor way of life in the holy goſpel, tho' probably he was a fiſherman, the common trade of that place: He had the honor to be the firſt called to be Chriſt's diſciple: for our Lord, after his return from the wilderneſs, having met with Andrew and his brother Peter, after

ſome ſhort diſcourſe parted from them, and the next day paſſing through Galilee, he found Philip, whom he commanded preſently to follow him, which he did accordingly; no ſooner had religion taken poſſeſſion of his mind, but away he goes and finds Nathaniel, acquaints him with the tididings of the new found Meſſias, and conducts him to him. After his call to the apoſtleſhip, there is not much recorded of him in the ſcriptures. It was to him the Lord propounded what they could get in the wilderneſs that would feed ſo vaſt a multitude; to whom he anſwered, that it would be very difficult to find enough in that place. It was to him that the Gentile proſelytes, who came up to the paſſover, addreſſed themſelves, when they deſired to ſee our Saviour. It was to him that our bleſſed Redeemer diſcourſed concerning himſelf, a little before the laſt paſchal ſupper. The Lord Jeſus had been fortifying the minds of his diſciples with proper conſiderations againſt his departure from them; he told them that no man could come to the Father but by him. Philip not readily underſtanding the tone of our Saviour's reaſonings, begged that he might ſee the Father. Our Lord gen-

tly reproved his ignorance, that after ſo long attendance upon his inſtructions, he ſhould not know that he was the image of his Father; the expreſs character of his infinite wiſdom, power and goodneſs, appearing in him; that he ſaid and did nothing but by his Father's appointment, which if they did not believe, his miracles were ſufficient evidence; that therefore ſuch demands were unneceſſary and impertinent, and that it argued great weakneſs, after above three years converſe with him, and under his diſcipline and inſtruction, that they ſhould have ſo little underſtanding in theſe matters.

In the diſtribution of the ſeveral regions of the world, made by the apoſtles ſome think that Upper Aſia was the province which was aſſigned to Philip, where he applied himſelf with indefatigable diligence and induſtry, to recover men out of the ſnares of ſatan, to the embracing and acknowledging, of the truth, and by the conſtancy of his preaching, and the efficacy of his miracles, gained numerous converts, whom he baptized into the chriſtian faith, at once curing both ſouls and bodies, their ſouls of error and idolatry, and their bodies of infirmities and diſtempers; healing

diſeaſes, diſpoſſeſſing demons, ſettling churches, and appointing them paſtors and teachers.

Having for many years ſucceſsfully managed his apoſtolical office, in thoſe parts, he came toward the latter end of his life to Hierapolis in Phrygia, a rich and populous, but moſt idolatrous place; amongſt the many vain and trifling deities to whom they paid religious worſhip, was a ſerpent or dragon, which they worſhipped with great and ſolemn veneration; the apoſtle was grieved to ſee them ſo groſly inſlaved in error; and therefore continually ſolicited heaven, till by prayer he had procured the death and deſtruction of this monſtrous deity, and then endeavoured to convince them of the folly and madneſs of paying divine adoration to ſuch filthy and odious creatures, and to declare to them the excellency of the chriſtian religion; wherein he was ſo ſucceſsful, that the people generally abhorred their former ſottiſh idolatry, and cordially embraced the chriſtian inſtitution; whereupon the enemy of mankind ſtirred up the magiſtrates of the city to purſue the old methods of perſecution and cruelty, who ſeized upon the bleſſed apoſtle, and

having put him in priſon, cauſed him to be ſeverely ſcourged, after which barbarity, he was led to execution, and being bound, was hanged up by the neck againſt a pillar, though others writ he was crucified. The apoſtle being dead, his body was taken down by St. Bartholomew, his fellow ſufferer, and his own ſiſter, who is ſaid to have been the conſtant companion of his travels, and decently buried, after which, having confirmed the people in the faith of Chriſt, they departed from thence.

It is generally affirmed that St. Philip was married, and that he had daughters whom he diſpoſed of in marriage; but though this be granted, yet they not carefully diſtinguiſhing between Philip the deacon, and Philip the apoſtle, have made ſome conclude them to be one and the ſame perſon, but with how little reaſon will appear, if we conſider that Philip, who could not be one of the apoſtolical college, the apoſtles declaring upon that occaſion, they had affairs of a higher nature to attend upon. So upon the perſecution that aroſe upon St. Stephen's death, the church was diſperſed, and they were all ſcattered abroad thro' the regions

of Judea and Samaria, and Philip the deacon, among the reſt, who went down to the city of Samaria, except the apoſtles who tarried behind at Jeruſalem, and when Philip had converted and baptized a conſiderable number in that place. he was forced to ſend for two of the apoſtles from Jeruſalem, ſo that by their hands they might receive the holy ghoſt ; which had been wholly needleſs if he had himſelf been one of the twelve apoſtles. St. Philip left no ſacred writings behind him, the greater part of the apoſtles having little leiſure to write, being employed in the miniſtry, as more immediately uſeful and ſubſervient to the happineſs of mankind. This is the account which the eccleſiaſtical writers give of this, as well as they do of other apoſtles, tho' not recorded in holy writ.

The Life of St. BARTHOLOMEW the apoſtle, who was flayed alive, by the command of a barbarous king.

His feſtival is celebrated Auguſt 24.

THERE is no queſtion but St. Bartholomew was an apoſtle, though the holy ſcripture takes notice only of his name, which occaſioned ſeveral ancient and mo-

dern authors to ſuppoſe, that he lies concealed under ſome other name; and that he can be no other than Nathaniel, one of the firſt diſciples that came to Chriſt, accordingly we may obſerve that as ſome of the evangeliſts never mention Bartholomew in the number of the apoſtles, ſo others take no notice of Nathaniel; but that which renders the thing moſt ſpecious and probable is, that we find Nathaniel particularly reckoned up with the other apoſtles, to whom our Lord appeared at the ſea of Tiberias.

The difficulty being cleared, we proceed to a more particular account of him; who is thought by ſome to have been a Syrean of a royal extraction, and to have derived his pedigree from the Ptolemies, kings of Egypt. But it is manifeſt, that he (as well as the reſt of the apoſtles) was a Galilean, and of Nathaniel, we know it is particularly ſaid, that he was of Cana in Galilee, the ſcripture takes no notice of his trade, or way of life, though ſome circumſtances ſeem to intimate that he was a fiſherman. At his firſt coming to Chriſt, he was conducted by Philip, who told him, that they had found the long looked for Meſſias; and when he had objected that the Meſſias could not be born

at Nazareth, Philip bids him come and ſatisfy himſelf. At his firſt appearance our bleſſed ſaviour entertains him with the character of a man of true ſimplicity and integrity; ſurprized he was at our Lord's ſalutation, wondering how he could know him ſo well at firſt ſight, whoſe face he had never ſeen before, but he was anſwered, that he had ſeen him under the fig tree, before Philip called him. Being convinced by this inſtance of our Lord's divinity, he preſently made his confeſſion, that he was ſure that Jeſus was the promiſed Meſſias, the ſon of God whom he had appointed to be king and governor of his church; our ſaviour told him, that if upon theſe inducements he could believe him to be the Meſſias, he ſhould have far greater arguments to confirm his faith; that ere long he ſhould ſee the heavens opened to receive him thither, and the angels viſibly appearing to wait and attend upon him.

Concerning our apoſtle's travels up and down the world to propagate the chriſtian faith; the antients give an account, that he went as far as that part of India which borders upon Ethiopia, and that he there left a copy of St. Matthew's goſpel; and they relate farther, that Paulinus, a man famous for his ſkill in philoſophy, and par-

ticularly in the inſtitutions of the ſtoicks, having embraced chriſtianity, he in a devout and zealous imitation of the apoſtles, was inflamed with zeal to propagate the faith of Chriſt in thoſe eaſtern countries, and came as far as India, meeting here with ſome that yet retained the knowledge of Chriſt, and found St. Matthew's goſpel written in Hebrew, there left, as the tradition was, by St. Bartholomew, one of the twelve apoſtles, when he preached the true faith to thoſe nations.

After the labours of St. Bartholomew in theſe parts of the world, he returned to the more weſtern and northern countries of Aſia, at Hierapolis in Phrygia, we find him, in company with Philip, inſtructing the inhabitants in the principles of chriſtianity, and convincing them of the folly of their heatheniſh worſhip, which ſo enraged the idolaters, that he was deſigned for martyrdom at the ſame time with Philip, but upon a ſudden conviction, that the divine juſtice would revenge their deaths, he was taken down and diſmiſt.

Hence it is probable, that after this, St. Bartholomew went to Lyconia. His laſt remove was to Albanople, in Armenia the great, a place miſerably overgrown with idolatry, from which he tho't to reclaim

the people. This ſo enraged the governor of the country; that he ſentenced him to be crucified, which, ſome ſay he cheerfully ſuffered, comforting and converting the convert gentiles to the laſt minute of his life; ſome ſay he was crucified with his head downwards, others affirm, that he was flayed alive before his crucifixion, a barbarity uſed both by the Perſians, and Egyptians, and from whom they might borrow this horrible and inhuman cruelty.

The life of St. ANDREW the Apoſtle, who was bound to a croſs, from whence he preached to the people.

His Feſtival is celebrated November 30.

ST. Andrew was born at Bethſaida, a city of Galilee, ſon of John or Jonas, a fiſherman of that town, and brother to Simon Peter; he was bro't up to his father's trade, and was employed therein, till our bleſſed Saviour called him to another kind of fiſhing.

John the baptiſt having lately riſen up in the Jewiſh church, great multitudes followed him to hear his doctrine and exhortations; he had alſo a number of ſelect diſciples, who more particularly accompanied him, in the number of which was our apoſtle St. Andrew, who was with him

about Jordan. Our Lord coming that way, upon his approach, the baptiſt told them, that this was the Meſſias; whereupon Andrew and another diſciple followed our Saviour to the place of his abode, after ſome diſcourſe with him, Andrew goes and acquaints his brother Simon, and both together came to Chriſt, yet ſtaid not long with him, but returned home, and exerciſed their callnig for more than a year, till our holy redeemer paſſing through Galilee, fully ſatisfied them of his divinity, and commanded them to follow him, which they did immediately. Shortly after Andrew, together with the reſt, was choſen to be one of thoſe that were to be Chriſt's immediate vicegerents for planting and propogating the chriſtian faith. Little elſe is recorded of him in the ſacred ſtory, his actions being comprehended in the general account of the reſt of the apoſtles. Our Lord being aſcended into heaven, and the apoſtles diſperſed through all nations, to publiſh the everlaſting goſpel, ſome of the ancients relate, that Andrew travelled into Scythia, where he continued for ſome conſiderable time, going from one place to another, preaching the goſple, and ſettling the churches, meeting in many places with great troubles and oppoſition; hence in proceſs of time, he

came to Byzantium, now called Conſtantinople, where he inſtructed the inhabitants in the knowledge of the chriſtian religion, and founded a church.

After this he travelled through Thrace, Macedonia, and Achaia, where for many years he cultivated the true faith, and at length came to Patrea, a city of Achaia, where he gave his laſt and great teſtimony of the verity of it by laying down his life in its defence, of the manner of whoſe martyrdom ſome authors give the following account.

Agas, proconſul of Aſia, coming to Patrea, and obſerving that great numbers of the people had embraced the chriſtian doctrine, he endeavoured to reclaim them, whereupon the apoſtle went to him, and expoſtulated with him about the matter, but the proconſul derided him as the propagator of a religion, the author and publiſher whereof the Jews had infamouſly put to death upon the croſs.

The apoſtle from hence took occaſion to demonſtrate the excellency and certainty of that religion, but the governor would hear nothing againſt his own ſuperſtitious and idolatrous worſhip; and threatened him, that if he did not offer ſacrifice to his pagan idols, he ſhould ſuf-

fer death upon the croſs, in conformity to the firſt broachers of that new faith which he profeſſed, after which he was commanded back to priſon. The next day he was brought before the proconſul, who perſuaded him not to loſe his life, and the pleaſures of this world, for an uncertain reward in another. The apoſtle on the contrary inſiſted upon the folly and vanity of the worldly enjoyments, and the certainty of a day of judgment, when every man muſt give an account of all that he hath done in the body, whether it be good, or whether it be evil, that if he did not believe in Jeſus Chriſt, the Saviour of the world, he muſt certainly endure eternal torments in hell.

This ſo enraged the proconſul, that he told him, he muſt either inſtantly renounce his fond opinions, or elſe he ſhould ſuffer the greateſt torments that could be inflicted on him. The apoſtle replied, that he feared not his tortures, and did not doubt but Chriſt would ſtrengthen him to endure all manner of barbarity, rather than deny his former profeſſion of the true faith. The proconſul then commanded him to be ſcourged by ſeven officers, called lictors, who ſucceſſively whipt his naked body; but ſeeing his great patience and

undauntedneſs under the cruel uſage, he commanded him to be crucified, but not to be faſtenened with nails, but tied with cords, that he might be the longer in dying.

But coming within the ſight of the croſs, he heartily rejoiced, ſaying that the long deſired and expected happy hour, wherein he might bear teſtimony to his glorious and renowned maſter, after having prayed and exhorted the people to continue conſtant in the faith, which he in his life time delivered to them, he was faſtened to the croſs, whereon it is ſaid, he hung two days, teaching and inſtructing the multitude all the while, and exhorting them to ſuffer chearfully, whatſoever cruelties their enemies ſhould inflict upon them if ever they ſhould be called to bear witneſs of the truth. In the mean time great importunity was uſed with the proconſul to take him down from the croſs; but the bleſſed apoſtle earneſtly begged of the Lord, that he might at this time ſeal the truth with his blood, and God heard his prayer, and he immediately expired, November 30th though in what year it is as uncertain, as that this account given by eccleſiaſtical hiſtorians, is to be depended on.

The life of St. THOMAS the apoſtle, who was run through with a lance, at Coromandel, in the Eaſt-Indies.

His feſtival is obſerved, December 21.

THE Jews, as we have obſerved, uſed commonly when travelling into other countries, or familiarly converſing with the Greeks and Romans, to aſſume to themſelves a Greek or Latin name of affinity, and ſometimes of the very ſame ſignification, with that of their own country. This St. Thomas, according to the Syriack import of his name, was called Didymus, which has the ſame ſignification. The hiſtory of the goſpel takes no particular notice either of his country or kindred, his employment was a fiſherman, he was afterward, together with the reſt, called to the apoſtleſhip; where not long after he gave an eminent inſtance of his hearty willingneſs to undergo the ſaddeſt fate that might attend them; for when the reſt of the apoſtles diſſuaded our Saviour from going to Judea, leſt the Jews ſhould ſtone him, as they a little before had attempted, St. Thomas deſires them not to hinder Chriſt's journey thither, tho' it might coſt them their lives, probably concluding, that inſtead of raiſing Lazarus from the dead, they themſelves ſhould be ſent with

him, to their own graves; ſo that he made up in pious affections, what he ſeemed to want in the quickneſs of his underſtanding, not readily underſtanding ſome of our Lord's dicourſes, not over forward to believe, till he had ocular demonſtration of his reſurrection. When our Saviour, a little before his total ſufferings, told his diſciples, that he was going to prepare a place for them, to which they might follow, as knowing where it was, our apoſtle roundly replied, that he knew it not. To which Chriſt gives this ſatisfactory anſwer, that he was the living way.

Our Lord being dead, his diſciples were exceedingly diſtracted, between hope and diſpair about his reſurrection, which engaged him the ſooner to make his appearance; wherefore the very day whereon he aroſe, he came into the houſe where they met together, though the doors were faſt ſhut for fear of the Jews. At this meeting St. Thomas was abſent, having probably never come into their company ſince their diſperſion in the garden, where every one's fears prompted them to conſult their own ſafety. At his return, the diſciples told him, that the Lord had appeared to them, but he obſtinately refuſed to believe that it was he, except he

might ſee the very print of the nails, and feel the wounds in his ſide and hands; his compaſſionate maſter would not take advantage of the man's refractory unbelief, but upon that day ſeven-night, as they were ſolemnly met at their holy worſhip, he appeared to them again, and calling Thomas, bid him look upon his hands, and put his finger in the print of the nails, and thurſt his hand into the hole of his ſide, and thereby ſtrengthen his faith. The apoſtle was quickly convinced of his error, confeſſing, that he acknowledged him to be his Lord and maſter.

Our bleſſed Redeemer being aſcended into heaven, and having eminently given gifts, and miraculous powers to the apoſtles, St. Thomas moved thereby to divine inſpiration, is ſaid to have ſent Thaddeus, one of the ſeventy diſciples to Agbarus, king of Edeſſa, whom he cured of an inveterate diſtemper, who converted him and his ſubjects to the chriſtian faith. It is recorded, that the province allotted to St. Thomas, was Parthia, from whence he proceeded to preach the goſpel in Media, Perſia, Coromania, Hyrcania, Bactria, and the neighbouring nations. One of the ancients ſays, that in Perſia he met with the three wiſe men who came that

long journey out of the eaſt, to bring preſents to our new born ſaviour, whom he baptized, and took along with him as his companions and aſſiſtants in propagating the goſpel. Hence he travelled into Ethiopia, and afterward came to India, where we are told he was afraid to have ventured himſelf, till he was encouraged by a viſion, that aſſured him of the divine preſence and protection. He travelled very far in the eaſtern countries, till he arrived, at the nation of the Brachmans; preaching in all places where he arrived, and by gentle methods, and the efficacy of the chriſtian doctrine, he reclaimed the people from their blind ſuperſtition and idolatry.

The Portugals who inhabit thoſe parts, relate, that St. Thomas came firſt to Socatora, an iſland in the Arabian ſea, where having converted many, he travelled farther into the eaſt, and having ſucceſsfully planted the true faith, returned back to Coromandel, where he began to erect a place for divine worſhip, till prohibited by the prince and prieſt of the kingdom; but the apoſtle having wro't ſeveral miracles, the work went on, and the Sultan, or king himſelf embraced chriſtianity. The Brachmans plainly perceiving that this

progreſs of the goſpel would endanger their intereſt, and in time extirpate their falſe religion, thought it high time to prevent its ſpreading, and that it was abſolutely neceſſary that the apoſtle ſhould be taken out of the way; there was a tomb not far off the city, where St. Thomas uſed to retire to his ſolitudes and private devotions; thither the Brachmans and their followers purſued him, and while he was fervent in prayer, firſt aſſaulted him with darts and ſtones, till one of them coming nearer, ran him through with a lance. His body was taken up by his diſciples, and buried in the church which he had lately erected.

While one of the viceroys of Portugal reſided in thoſe parts, there were brought to him certain braſs tables, whoſe inſcription none could read, till at length by the help of a Jew, they were found to contain only a donation made by St. Thomas, of a piece of ground for building a church. They tell alſo of a famous croſs found in St. Thomas' chapel, whereon was engraven an unintelligible character, which learned Dramon rendered to this effect; that Thomas, a Divine perſon, was ſent to thoſe countries by the ſon of God, in the days of king Sagamo, to inſtruct the in-

habitants in the knowledge of the true God; that he built a church, and performed admirable miracles, but at laſt while he was upon his knees, offering his addreſſes to heaven, he was thruſt through with a ſword, and that this croſs was ſtained with his blood, and left as a memorial of theſe tranſactions.

The Life of St. Jude the Apoſtle, who was ſhot to death with arrows.

His feaſt is celebrated with St. Simon, October 28.

THIS Apoſtle is mentioned by ſeveral names in the hiſtory of the goſpel, namely, Jude, Thaddeus, and Lebbeus, it being uſual in holy writ, for the ſame perſon to have more proper names than one; the firſt was common among the Jews, as being the name of one of the twelve patriarchs of their nation, which it is thought he changed, as ſounding like that of Judas Iſcariot, that arch traitor which was very odious and deteſtable among the chriſtians; and called himſelf Thaddeus, a word of the very ſame ſignification, and is ſometimes ſtiled Judas, the brother James, for his name Lebbeus, is derived from the Hebrew word, which ſignifies a lion, alluding to Jacob's prophecy, that Judas ſhould be a lion, &c.

As to his parentage, he was one of our Lord's kindred the ſon of Joſeph, and brother of James the leſs; we do not find when he was called to the apoſtleſhip, only that he was enumerated among them, nor is any thing particularly recorded of him afterwards more than one queſtion that he propounded to our Saviour, who having told him what great things he and his father would do, and what particular manifeſtations he would make of himſelf to his diſciples and followers after his reſurrection, St. Jude, whoſe thoughts, as well as of the reſt, were taken up with the expectation of a temporal kingdom of the Meſſias, who knowing that could not conſiſt with the publick ſolemnity of the glorious ſtate they looked for, aſked him, What was the reaſon that he would manifeſt himſelf to them, and not to the world? Our Lord replied, that the world was not capable of thoſe divine manifeſtations, as being ſtrangers and enemies to what ſhould fit them for heaven, "that they were only good men, perſons of a divine temper of mind, and religious obſervers of his law and will, whom God would honour with theſe familiar converſes.

Euſebius relates expreſſly, that ſoon after our Lord's aſcenſion, St. Thomas diſpatched Thaddeus the apoſtle, to Agbarus, King of Edeſſa, where he healed diſeaſes, wrought miracles, expounded the doctrine of Chriſtianity, and converted the King and the people to the true faith, and when Agbarus offered him rich gifts, and preſents for his great labor of love in the Lord, he in a noble ſcorn replied, That he had little reaſon to receive from others, what he had already relinquiſhed here. He is ſaid to have died peaceably, and to have been moſt honorably buried but by the general conſent of the Latin Church, he is ſaid to have travelled to Perſia, where after great ſucceſs in his Apoſtolical Miniſtry for many years, he was at laſt, for his free and open reproving the ſuperſtitious rites and uſages of the Magi, cruelly murdered, by being tied to a ſtake, and ſhot to death with arrows.

That he was one of the married diſciples manifeſtly appears, becauſe Euſebius gives the following account of his grandſons; Domitian the bloody Roman tyrant, whoſe wickedneſs had awakened in him the quickeſt jealouſies, and made him ſuſpect every one that had but the leaſt pretence to be his co-rival in the

Empire, being informed that ſome of the line of David and Chriſt's kindred did yet remain; two Grand-children of St. Jude, the brother of our Lord, were brought before him, who having confeſſed that they were of the family and race of David, he enquired what eſtates and profeſſions they had, who told him, they had only a few acres of land, out of the improvement whereof they paid him tribute, and maintained themſelves with their own hard labor, as by the hardneſs of their hands did appear, which they then ſhewed him. He then enquired of them concerning Chriſt, and what kind of kingdom it was his followers talked of, and when it would appear; they replied, "that Chriſt's kingdom was not of this world, nor did it conſiſt in the grandeur and dominions thereof, but that it was an Heavenly and Angelic kingdom, and would finally take place at the end of the world, when coming in great glory, our Lord would judge the quick and the dead, and reward every one according to their works." The Emperor judging by their ſimplicity and meanneſs, that no danger could acrue to him, diſmiſſed them without any ſeverity; however, they were accounted Chriſtian martyrs, and preferred to great em-

ployments in the reign of the Emperor Trajan.

St. Jude left only the Epiſtle of catholic and univerſal concern, inſcribed at large to all Chriſtians; it was ſome time before it met with a general reception in the Church, but was afterwards added to the ſcripture canon; the author, indeed, ſtiles not himſelf an Apoſtle, no more doth St. James and St. John, nor ſometimes St. Paul himſelf, and why ſhould he fare the worſe for calling himſelf the ſervant of Jeſus Chriſt; when he might have added, not only an Apoſtle, but the brother of our Lord. The deſign of his Epiſtle is to preſerve the Chriſtians from being infected with the looſe and debauched principles vented by Simon Magus, and his followers, whoſe wretched doctrines and practices he briefly and elegantly repreſents, who ought to be avoided as pernicious ſeducers, leſt they ſhould periſh with them in that terrible vengeance which was ready to overtake them,

The Life of St. SIMON the Apoſtle, called the Zealote, who was crucified in Perſia.

His feſtival is obſerved with that of St. Jude, October 28.

ST. SIMON the Apoſtle was, as ſome think, one of the four brothers of our Lord, ſons of Joſeph, by a former marriage; in the catalogue of the Apoſtles he is called Simon the Canaanite, as alſo Simon Zealote or the Zealot, probably from his warm, active temper, and zealous forwardneſs in ſome particular way or profeſſion of religion, before his coming to our Saviour; for the better underſtanding this, we muſt know, that there was a diſtinct ſect among the Jews, called the ſect of the Zealots, they were earneſt aſſerters of the honor of the law, and the ſtrictneſs and purity of religion, inſomuch, that they took upon themſelves to queſtion notorious offenders, without ſtaying for the ordinary formalities of the law; yea, when the caſe required, executing capital vengeance upon them, 'till at length their zeal degenerating into all manner of licentiouſneſs, they not only became the peſts of the Government at home, but opened a door for the Romans to break in upon them, to their final and irrecoverable ruin.

They were continually prompting the people to throw off the Roman yoke, and recover their native liberty, and thereby bringing all things into diſorder and confuſion, made advantage to themſelves of theſe commotions; Joſephus, the Jewiſh Hiſtorian, complains grievouſly of them, and gives a large account of their ſeditious practices, and every where bewails their villainies, as being the greateſt plague to their nation. Now when Jeruſalem was cloſely beſieged by the Romans, they ceaſed not to create tumults and factions within the city, and were indeed the main cauſe of the Jews' ill ſucceſs in that fatal war. It is probable that all who went under the notion of this ſect, were of this ungodly and wretched temper, but that ſome of them were of a moſt ſober and peaceable diſpoſition, and as it is not to be doubted but that our Simon was one of that ſect in general, ſo there is reaſon to believe he was one of the better ſort; however, this makes no more a reflection upon his being called to the Apoſtleſhip, than it did upon St. Matthew, who was a Publican, or St. Paul's being a Phariſee, and ſo zealouſly perſecuting the church of God.

Being inveſted in the Apoſtolical office, no farther mention is made in the Hiſtory of the Goſpel, concerning what the Apoſtles did, 'till their diſperſion up and down the World, and then he doubly applied himſelf to the performance of his office and charge. He is ſaid to have directed his travels towards Egypt, thence to Cyrene and Africa, and throughout Mauritania, and all Lybia, preaching the Goſpel in thoſe remote and barbarous countries, nor could the coldneſs of the climate benumb his zeal, or hinder him from ſhipping himſelf over theſe Northern parts of the World, yea, even to Britain itſelf, where he is ſaid to have preached the Goſpel, and wrought many miracles, and afterwards in defiance of all the troubles and difficulties which he underwent, ſuffered martyrdom for the faith of Chriſt, being crucified by the Infidels in the Eaſtern Country, and buried with them.

Others indeed affirm, that after he had preached the Goſpel in Egypt, he went into Meſopotamia, where he met with St. Jude the Apoſtle, and accompanied him in his journey to Perſia, where having gained a conſiderable harveſt to the Chriſtian faith, they were both crowned with martyrdom; but it is the opinion of

learned men, that this account hath no clear foundation in antiquity to build upon.

The Life of St. MATTHIAS, who was ſaid to have been firſt ſtoned, and then beheaded.

His memory is celebrated February 24.

PARTICULAR remarks concerning St. Matthias, are not to be expected from the Hiſtory of the Goſpel, he not being an Apoſtle of the firſt election. He was one of our Lord's diſciples, and probably one of the ſeventy that attended him the whole courſe of the public Miniſtry, and after his deceaſe was elected into the Apoſtleſhip upon this occaſion. Judas Iſcariot, who had been one of the twelve, immediately called by Chriſt, to be one of his intimate diſciples, equally empowered and commiſſioned with the reſt to preach and work miracles, and yet all this while was a man of vile and corrupt deſigns, branded with no meaner character than Thief and Murderer, proſtituting religion, and the honor of his office to covetouſneſs and evil acts, which baſe temper betrayed him, as in the iſſue, to the moſt fatal end, ſo to the moſt deſperate attempt, yea, to the moſt prodigi-

ous impiety that the ſun ſhone upon, namely, his betraying his innocent Lord and maſter into the hands of his cruel enemies; but afterward awakened with the horror of the fact, his conſcience aſſaulted him ſo ſeverely, that not able to bear up under the furious revenges of his own mind, he never reſted 'till he had diſpatched himſelf by a violent death.

A vacancy being thus made, the firſt thing they did after their return from Mount Olivet (where our Lord took his leave of them, to go to St. John's houſe, in Mount Sion) was to fill up the number with a proper perſon, two were propounded in order to the choice, Joſeph called Barſebas, and Matthias the way of election was by lot, according to the uſual cuſtom of the Jews in doubtful caſes; the lots being put in, Matthias's name was drawn out, and he thereby dignified with the Apoſtolic Office. Not long after, the promiſed powers of the Holy Ghoſts were conferred upon the Apoſtles, to qualify them for that great and difficult employment upon which they were ſent, and among the reſt, St. Matthias beſtowed the firſt fruits of his Miniſtry in the Province of Judea, where having reaped a conſiderable harveſt, he betook

himſelf to other countries; one writes, that he preached the Goſpel in Macedonia, where the Gentiles, to make an experiment of his faith and integrity, gave him a poiſonous and intoxicating portion, which he chearfully drank off in the name of Chriſt, without the leaſt prejudice to himſelf, and the ſame portion having deprived an hundred and fifty of their ſight, by laying his hands upon them, he recovered them again.

The Greeks with more probability, report him to have travelled Eaſtward, ſome ſay to Ethiopia; the Inhabitants where he came, were very wild and barbarous, and his uſage among them was accordingly; for here meeting with a people of a fierce and untractable humour, he was treated by them with great inhumanity; from whom after all his labors and ſufferings, and a numerous converſion of perſons to chriſtianity, he obtained at laſt the crown of Martyrdom, in the ſixty-firſt year from our Lord's nativity.

There is little certainty of the manner of his death; ſome writers of reputation, report, that he died at a place called Sebaſtopie, and that he was buried near the Temple of the Sun. Another relates, that he was ſeized by the Jews, as a blaſ-

phemer, to have been firſt ſtoned, and then beheaded. But the Greeks and other antiquaries write, that he was crucified, and that his body was preſerved a long time at Jeruſalem, and ſuppoſed to have been tranſlated by the devotion of Helena, mother of Conſtantine the Great, to Rome; where ſome parts of it are pretended to be ſhown with great veneration, though others, with as much fierceneſs contend, that his relics are brought to, and are ſtill preſerved at Triers, in Germany. His memory is celebrated in the Weſtern Churches, February twenty four. Among many other Apochryphal writings attributed to the Apoſtles, there was a Goſpel publiſhed under the name of St. Matthias, mentioned by Euſebius, and condemned with the reſt, by Goluſius, a Biſhop of Rome, as it had been rejected by others before him. Under his name alſo, there were extant traditions cited by Clemens of Alexandria, from whence, doubtleſs, the Nicolaitans publiſhed many vile and ſcandalous doctrines, and the Marcionites and Volantinians, under the pretended patronage of his name, defended ſome of their moſt abſurd and impious opinions.

The Life of St. BARNABAS the Apoſtle, who was ſtoned by the Jews at Salamis.

His feſtival is obſerved June 11.

HE was firſt named Joſes, or Joſeph, and afterwards Barnabas, which ſignifies, the ſon of conſolation, given him by the Apoſtles, becauſe he had a ſingular gift and art in comforting the weak, he being repreſented in the Holy Writ, as a perſon of a compaſſionate, eaſy, and mild temper, very ready to forgive injuries, yet of a majeſtic and awful carriage, commanding reſpect and reverence: he was a Jew of the Tribe of Levi, and is reckoned to be the principal of the ſeventy Diſciples. After our Lord's aſcenſion, perceiving that the neceſſities of the Churches required relief, he ſold an eſtate which he had in the Iſle of Cyprus, and brought the whole price to be diſtributed by the Apoſtles, to thoſe that were moſt indigent, and in want; this practice was followed by ſeveral other Chriſtians at that time, none of them thinking it juſt or reaſonable for themſelves to live in plenty, while their brethren were reduced to ſtraits for want of the conveniences of this life, and therefore had all things in common, wherein the charity of Barnabas was very remar-

kable, his eſtate being much larger than any of the reſt, who yet gave the firſt example of charity and bounty to the Church.

After the ſale of his eſtate, he made his reſidence in Jeruſalem, whither St. Paul coming three years after his converſion, the Apoſtles denied him admittance into their ſociety, who had been ſuch a furious perſecutor of the Chriſtians, and made his name terrible among them. But Barnabas took him, and brought him to the Apoſtles, and declared unto them, how he had ſeen the Lord in the way, and how he had ſpoken to him, and that he had preached boldly at Damaſcus, in the name of Jeſus, whereupon he was received into their fellowſhip, and he with them, coming in and going out at Jeruſalem, aſſerting to the Jews, that Jeſus was the true Meſſias, whereby he ſo much enraged the Jews, that they conſpired to take away his life.

Some years after, ſome Chriſtian Jews fled from the perſecution that was raiſed at Jeruſalem about St. Stephen; now when they were in the Church of Antioch, and they miniſtered to the Lord, the Holy Ghoſt ſaid, ſeperate me Barnabas and Saul, for the work whereto I have

called them; ſo when they had faſted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they ſent them away. Barnabas coming to Antioch, to ſet things in order, upon his arrival, beheld with great joy, the great progreſs of the Goſpel among them, and exhorted them to continue ſtedfaſt in the truth and doctrine of Chriſtianity, and confirmed many therein, he afterward ſent for Paul to Antioch, to aſſiſt him in the propagation of the Goſpel; and he with Paul, carried the contributions of the Chriſtians of Antioch, to Jeruſalem. At length, upon ſome difference about circumciſion, they were ſeparated, Barnabas ſailing to Cyprus, and Paul to Syria and Cilicia, but they were afterward fully reconciled, retaining their Chriſtian charity and love to one another, and to the ſouls of their brethren, and then parted by diſtant regions from each other.

Some of the ancients write, that he continued 'till his death in Cyprus, but preached the Goſpel in other places, and was ſent by him to Corinth, along with Titus. He was a prophet and a teacher, of whom the Council of the Apoſtles gave this character, that he was a man who had hazarded his life for the Lord Jeſus, and entirely given up himſelf to

the labor of preaching the Goſpel. There is an Epiſtle that goes under his name; which, if he was the author of, he muſt have lived 'till after the deſtruction of Jeruſalem, which was ſeventy years after the birth of our Saviour, and is recorded to have ſuffered martyrdom, being ſtoned to death by the Jews at Salamis, and to have been buried within a furlong of that city. There is likewiſe a Goſpel attributed to him, as well as to St. Matthias, and another of the acts of Barnabas, pretended to be written by John Mark, his Couſin, who went with him into Cyprus, but both of them ſeem to be the inventions of ſome perſons in latter ages, being filled with fables and impertinences.

The life of St. PAUL the Apoſtle, who was beheaded at Rome, by Nero, the Roman tyrant.

His feaſt is celebrated January 25.

ST. Paul was born at Tarſus, the Metropolis of Celicia, a city very rich, with an Academy and Schools for polite learning and philoſophy; his parents were Jews, of the tribe of Benjamin, the youngeſt ſon of the old patriarch Jacob, who thus propheſied of him, "Benjamin ſhall

raven as a wolf, in the morning he ſhall devour the prey, and at night divide the ſpoil ;" this prophetical character, Tertullian and others after him, will have to be accompliſhed in our Apoſtle, as a ravenous wolf in the morning, devouring the prey: that is, as a perſecutor of the Church, in the firſt part of his life deſtroying the flock of God, and in the evening dividing the ſpoil ; that is, in his declining and reduced age, as a doctor of the nations, feeding and diſtributing to Chriſt's ſheep.

In his youth he was educated at Tarſus, being fully inſtructed in the ſchools in all liberal arts and ſciences, whereby he came acquainted will all foreign learning, and the Jews have a maxim, that he who learns not his ſon a trade, teacheth him to be a thief ; he was bred a tent-maker, and therefore in the writings of the Rabbis, they were generally nominated by their callings, as Rabbi Joſes, the tanner, Rabbi Jochanan, the ſhoe-maker, Rabbi Judea, the baker ; they daily working at their trades to maintain themſelves with their own hands : Having laid foundations of human learning at Tarſus, he was ſent by his parents to Jeruſalem, to be perfected in the ſtudy of the law, under

the tutelage of Rabbi Gamaliel, the ſon of that Simon who 'tis thought came to the Temple and took Chriſt in his arms. Gamaliel was a Preſident of the Court of the Sanhedrim, and doctor of the civil law, who made that wiſe and excellent ſpeech in behalf of the Apoſtles and their doctrines; nay, he is ſaid to be a Chriſtian; and his ſitting in that council was connived at by the Apoſtles, that he might the better favor their affairs. Among the various ſects of the Jewiſh Church, he was eſpecially educated in the principles and inſtitutions of the Phariſees, who were exceſſively proud and inſolent, cenſuring whoſoever was not in their way, as reprobates, counting none pious but themſelves, and that all others were ſons of the earth; probably Paul might be of a better principle than ſome others, however, he could not endure contradiction, nor novelty in religion, and therefore when the Jews put St. Stephen to death, he ſtood by, and kept the cloaths of his executioners, and thereby loudly proclaimed his conſent to his martyrdom.

The ſtorm thus begun, a violent perſecution of the Chriſtians began at Jeruſalem, wherein our Apoſtle was a prime agent, being employed by the High Prieſt,

to hunt, and find out thoſe new heretics, who preached againſt the law of Moſes, getting a warrant from the Sanhedrim, to go and diſturb the Synagogues at Damaſcus, where many of the poor diſtreſſed children were fled. But God deſigning him for work of another nature, ſtopt him in his journey, as we read at large in the Acts of the Apoſtles, as likewiſe of his travels in Paleſtine and adjacent countries, and his dangerous voyage to Rome.

When he came to Rome, he acquainted the Jewiſh conſiſtory, that though he had been guilty of no crime, yet he was delivered into the hands of the Roman Governors, only for his conſtant aſſerting the reſurrection of the dead, which was the hope of every true Iſraelite. They replied, that they had received no advice concerning his religion, which was every where decryed both by the Jews and Gentiles. At a day appointed, he diſcourſed to them from morning to night, concerning the doctrine of the Holy Jeſus; yet ſome perſiſting in their infidelity, he told them plainly, that henceforth he would turn his preaching to the Gentiles, who would be glad to accept what they had ſcornfully rejected.

He was called by two names, one Hebrew, the other Latin, probably referring both to his Jewiſh and Roman capacity and relation; Saul was a name common in the tribe of Benjamin, ever ſince the firſt King of Iſrael, who was choſen out of that tribe, in memory whereof, they ſo named their children at their circumciſion. His other was Paul, aſſumed by him, as ſome think, at his converſion, to denote his humility, and others, that it was in memory of his converting Sergius-Paulus, the Roman Governor to the Chriſtian faith.

After this he was brought to his firſt hearing before the Roman Emperor, where thoſe friends which he expected ſhould ſtand by him, plainly deſerted him, but God ſtood by him, and encouraged him. Two years he preached at Rome, in his own hired houſe, converting ſome of all ranks and qualities, yea, ſeveral belonging to the court itſelf; there he met with Peter, and they were both together thrown into priſon, upon the perſecution raiſed againſt the Chriſtians, under pretence they had fired the City, though it was done by Nero's ſpecial command.—Some of the ancients make him engaged with Peter, in procuring the fall of that

miſerable wretch, Simon Magus, which ſtirred up the Emperor's implacable rage and fury againſt him. Another writes, that having converted one of Nero's concubines, of whom he was extremely fond, and reduced her to a life of much ſtrictneſs and chaſtity, ſo that ſhe abſolutely refuſed to comply with the Emperor's wanton and impure embraces, he thereupon treated the Apoſtle outrageouſly, calling him impoſtor, and a perverter of his ſubjects, giving orders that he ſhould be ſent to priſon, but underſtanding that he ſtill continued to perſuade the lady, who viſited him, to continue in her Chriſtian and pious reſolution, he commanded him to be put to death, as a Roman citizen, he was exempted from ſcourging, as malefactors uſed to be before their execution, to which when he was led, he is ſaid to have converted three ſoldiers who guarded him, and within a few days after, by the Emperor's command, became martyrs for the faith. Being come to the place, about three miles from Rome, he cheerfully gave his neck to the fatal ſtroke. Crucifying being too infamous a death for any but the worſt of ſlaves, beheading being

counted a more noble kind of death, among moſt nations.

Tradition reports (which many of the fathers verify) that when he was beheaded, a liquor more like milk than blood, iſſued from his veins, and ſpurted upon the cloaths of the executioner, which St. Chryoſtom ſaith, became the means of his converſion, with many others to the faith. He adds, that the Apoſtle ſuffered maytyrdom in the ſixty-eighth year of his age, and Conſtantine built a ſtately Church to his memory, wherein his remains were buried, about two hundred years after.

I NO 61

FINIS.

ON OUR BLESSED SAVIOUR.

WE often read our bleſſed Saviour wept,
But never laugh'd and ſeldom that he ſlept:
Ah, ſure his heavy eyes did wake and weep
For us that ſin, ſo oft, in mirth, and ſleep.

HE's like a rock, which when we ſtrive to ſhun,
We are in danger to be wreck'd upon;
But when our wide-ſpread arms ſeek refuge there,
It will ſecure us from the harms we fear.

ON OUR SAVIOUR'S PASSION.

THE earth did tremble, and Heaven's cloſed eye
Was loth to ſee the Lord of glory die:
The ſkies were clad in mourning, and the ſpheres
Forgat their harmony; the clouds dropt tears:
Th' ambitious dead aroſe to give him room;
And ev'ry grave did gape to be his tomb;
Th' affrighted Heavens ſent down eligious thunder;
The world's foundations loos'd, to loſe their founder:
Th' impatient temple rent her veil in two,
To teach our hearts what our ſad hearts ſhould do:
Shall ſenſeleſs things do this, and ſhall not I
Melt one poor drop to ſee my Saviour die?
Drill forth my tears, and trickle one by one,
'Till you have pierc'd this heart of mine, this ſtone.

I NO 61

SAMUEL LARKIN,

BOOKSELLER & STATIONER,

AT THE

PORTSMOUTH BOOKSTORE,

AND

CIRCULATING LIBRARY—

OPPOSITE THE POST-OFFICE,

MARKET-STREET,

PORTSMOUTH,

KEEPS CONSTANTLY FOR

SALE OR CIRCULATION,

A LARGE AND EXTENSIVE COLLECTION OF

BOOKS

IN THE DIFFERENT

BRANCHES OF LITERATURE;

ALSO,

BIBLES of all kinds and prices—Teſtaments—Watts's Pſalms and Hymns—Perry's, Webſters, and Dilworth's Spelling Books and Primers, by the Groce, Dozen or Single——Ainſworth's and Young's Latin Dictionaries—

Greek Lexicons, Teſtaments and Grammars—Clark's Eutropis, Eraſmus, and Introduction to making of Latin, Davidſon's Virgil—Cicero's Orations, with and without Tranſlations—Perry's and Entick's Pocket Dictionaries—Pike's Arithmetic; Fenning's Ditto—Moore's Practical Navigator—Seamans daily aſſiſtant—Ship Maſters aſſiſtant—Mariners Compaſs.—With a Variety of others including all the BOOKS generally uſed at COLLEGES, ACADEMIES, SCHOOLS, &c. at the loweſt prices.

PUBLIC or private LIBRARIES ſupplied on the beſt terms.

LIKEWISE,

A LARGE ASSORTMENT OF

STATIONARY,

OF EVERY KIND.

I NO 61